

ARL E-Metrics Project: Developing Indicators of Institutional Outcomes*

CNI Spring Task Force Meeting, Washington, D.C.

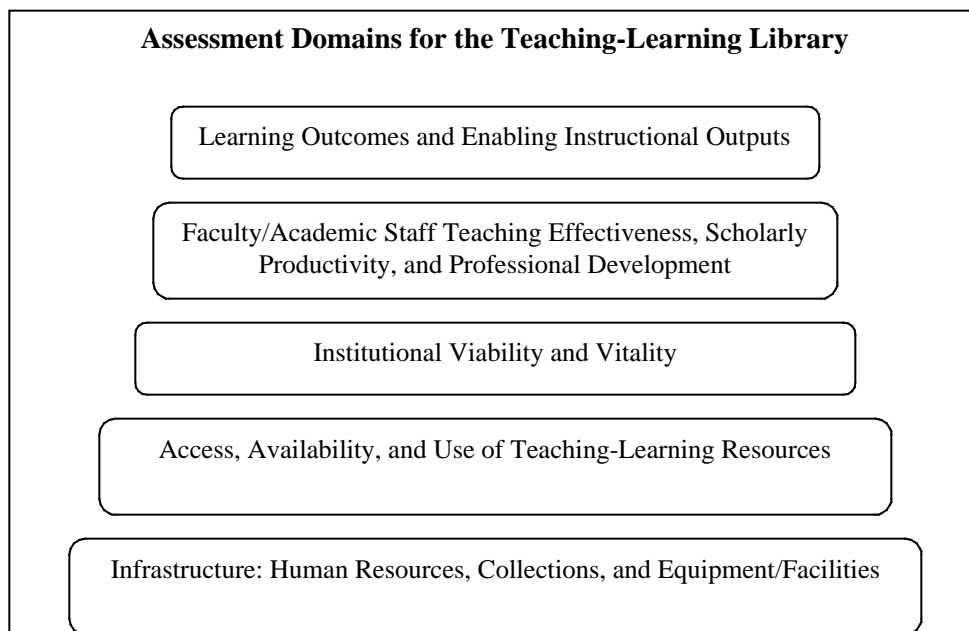
April 10, 2001

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Underlying the operations of a research library are the core values and goals of its larger institution or organization. In order to know whether the values are served and the goals achieved, we cannot rely on mere counts of networked resource use. Rather, it is critical that measurements in the library context be done strategically with an eye toward fulfillment of institutional goals. Accordingly, we need first to develop a general framework for understanding institutional outcomes and the research library's contributions thereto. Our goal is to then refine the framework so that individual libraries will be able to better identify key indicators of outcome-directed investments, activities, and performance that are particularly meaningful to their host institutions.

Lindauer (1998) presents a useful foundation for assessing the library and its networked services in terms of institutional outcomes. The following illustration from her work depicts the role that infrastructure plays and shows the importance of student-learning outcomes in a teaching institution by placing them above other domains. There is, however, interplay among all layers, which needs to be explored and developed.



Source: Lindauer, B. G. (1998). Defining and Measuring the Library's Impact on Campuswide Outcomes. *College & Research Libraries*, 59(6), 546-70.

Building on the work of Lindauer and others, we have developed a preliminary framework for modeling institutional outcomes (see page 2). As we continue to investigate the values and goals of ARL members in the context of outcomes, this framework will be refined. Performance and output measures will be matched with institutional goals in order to gain a quantitative and qualitative understanding of the relationship between the library and the institution it supports.

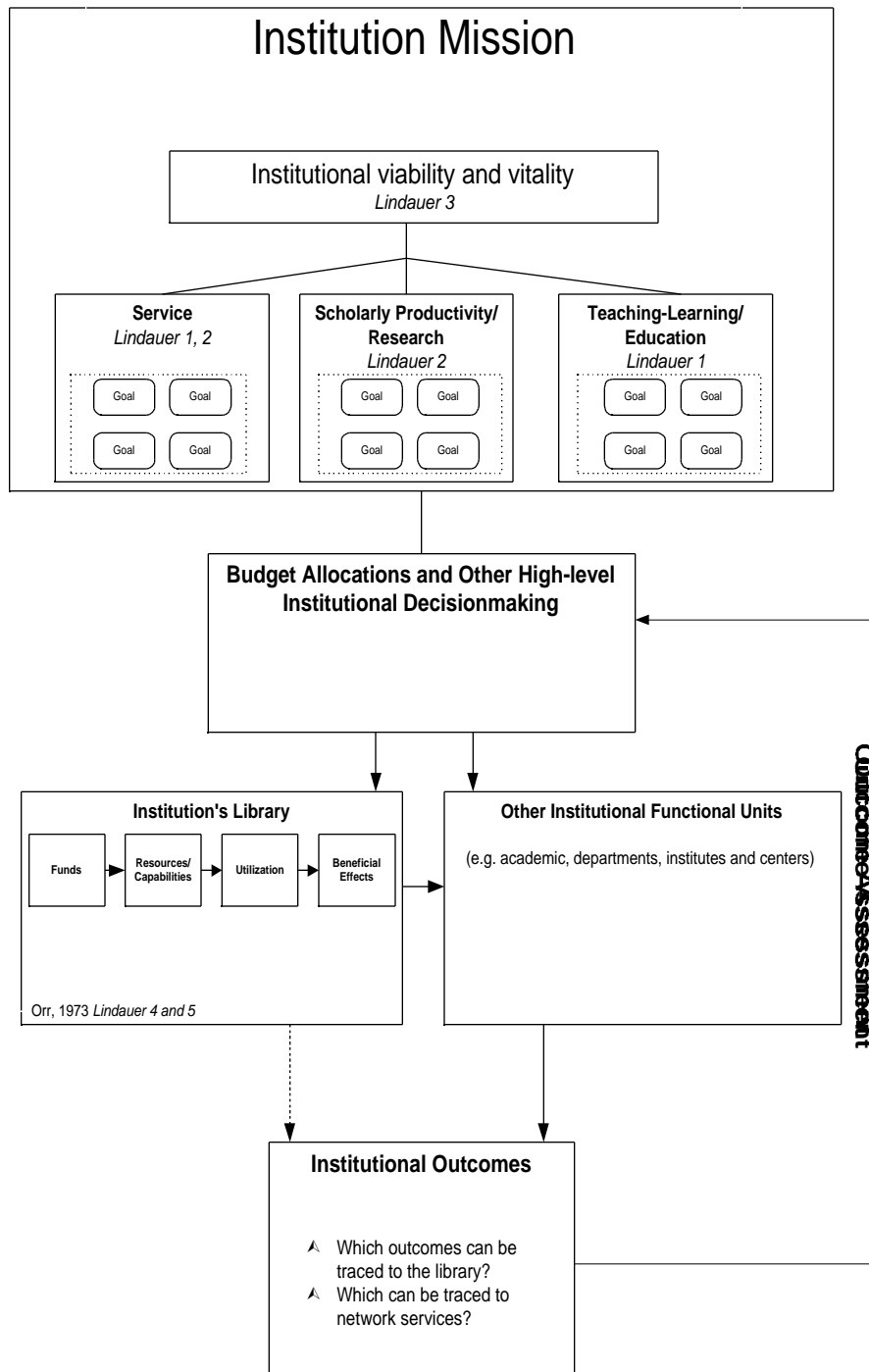
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* E-Metrics Project Website at <www.arl.org/stats/newmeas/emetrics/>.