

Closing The Loop: An Examination of University System of Georgia Provosts' and
Academic Library Deans' or Directors' Preferences for Communication and Attitudes
Concerning the Contribution of the Academic Library to the University's Mission

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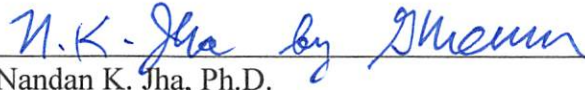
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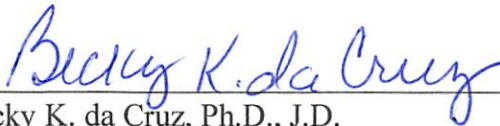
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ABSTRACT

In the current environment for higher education, it has become critical for all of the departments and colleges within a university to become more aware of their place in the overall mission of the university. This is especially true of the academic library, which had relied upon a reputation as the “heart” of an academic institution for many years. The new reality of shrinking budgets and an increased focus on student success and retention at colleges and universities has meant that this reputation has been challenged in recent years. If libraries are to remain at the “heart” of their campuses, they must re-envision how they approach funding requests and understand their role in campus-wide initiatives for retention and success.

One way that academic libraries can begin this process is through working to improving communication between the deans or directors who manage the library and the university provost who often serves as the supervisor of the deans or directors. This study examines that relationship to determine what differences there are between deans or directors and provosts in their communication preferences for funding requests and their perception of the library’s role in campus-wide initiatives to increase retention and student success. The study focused on these areas because two of the main challenges facing higher education in the literature were decreasing funding and the need to improve retention and student success metrics. The quantitative and qualitative data sets collected for this project are used to highlight areas of agreement and difference among deans, directors, and provosts and to recommend steps for future action, including the application of New Public Management theory for better understanding the current higher education landscape. The study also developed recommendations for future studies of

library and university administration. Through understanding these differences, academic library and university administrators can better understand how to improve their working relationships in a manner that can hopefully result in better outcomes for the library and the university.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Miranda. Her constant support and encouragement made a challenging and difficult time far more bearable. Thank you for believing in me. It is absolutely true that without your support, I could never have finished this project.

Chapter I
INTRODUCTION
Overview

The costs of higher education have risen dramatically in recent years, creating budget challenges at most institutions (Woodward, 2014). According to Murray and Ireland (2018, p. 337), “Higher education leaders, including presidents and provosts, who have long grappled with the “iron triangle of higher education” (access, cost, quality), must now engage many different stakeholders—legislators, accreditors, faculty, parents, alumni, and students—in navigating a complex field of social disruptions to higher education.” With the increased demand on presidents and provosts that has arisen from these changes, it has become more important for campus departments and organizations to understand how to effectively demonstrate their value to ensure their success (Murray & Ireland, 2018).

The financial burdens placed on colleges and universities since the Great Recession of 2008, have transformed priorities in higher education. According to Russell (2019), state appropriations fell dramatically between 2003 and 2013, resulting in an average of 28% less funding per student at public research universities. The funding situation has not improved in the years following the recession. According to one study, state appropriations in nearly every state were still below pre-recession levels (Russell, 2019). With decreasing levels of funding and increased levels of spending on higher

education, colleges have looked to find ways to improve efficiencies and secure what funding they can in order to meet budgetary constraints.

One way that colleges and universities have sought to improve their budgets is by making a more concerted effort to retain their students. In recent years there has been more of an imperative for departments across an institution's campus to take on more of a role in university-wide initiatives, especially where these programs involve the promotion of student-success metrics, including retention, progression, and graduation. A Primary Research Group (2016) survey on best practices in student retention included a section on "Training a retention minded staff" that asked respondents to discuss efforts the campus was making to train everyone about campus retention efforts. Though the responses to this question primarily discussed strategies in the classroom (Primary Research Group, 2016), these efforts go beyond just teaching faculty and colleges on campus as well. A recent study on academic library participation in university-wide retention efforts found that 89.9% of respondents worked at an institution where retention was a priority (Hubbard & Loos, 2013, p. 161). Most respondents in Hubbard and Loos (2013) also indicated that the imperative to be more proactive about retention in their libraries came from campus administrators outside their library.

It is fitting that the Hubbard and Loos (2013) study examined academic libraries because they are a campus entity that has found itself struggling to articulate its value when facing the changing landscape of higher education. This study examined the relationship between university provosts and academic library deans or directors in the University System of Georgia (USG). It gave special attention to academic library funding requests and the role the library plays in university wide initiatives that focus on

academic success and retention According to Lynch, Murray-Rust, Parker, Turner, Walker, et al., (2007, p. 213), the library could formerly rely on its reputation as “the heart of the university” to secure funding. However, the new fiscal realities in higher education have meant that this reputation is no longer enough to obtain the necessary funding needed to gain additional resources for the academic library (Lynch et al., 2007). New initiatives, such as the Association for College and Research Libraries’ (ACRL) *Value of Academic Libraries* (Oakleaf, 2010) have sought to determine data collection techniques for better demonstrating the importance of the academic library in the context of an academic institution.

These new methods of data collection might not be as valuable without effective leadership to communicate their main ideas to campus leaders. Fagan (2012) noted that the amount of resources a university president dedicates to the library was largely the result of their confidence in library leadership. However, at most academic institutions, it is the provost, not the president, that is the most important campus administrator to the academic library dean or director. According to Robertson (2015, p. 490), “At most institutions, libraries report directly to the provost, and the provost’s support is essential for ongoing investment.”

Statement of the Problem

Despite the importance of the relationship between academic library deans or directors and provosts, Robertson (2015) notes that relatively few studies on provosts’ perspectives on academic libraries have been conducted. Grimes (1993) is perhaps the first study to examine provosts’ attitudes about the academic library in depth. Lynch et al. (2007) followed up on Grimes (1993) study of provosts’ attitudes toward the academic

library fifteen years later, concluding that the library could no longer afford to rest on its historical reputation if it wished to remain relevant on a university campus. Most recently, Murray and Ireland (2018, p. 359) surveyed provosts about their perceptions and preferences concerning the academic libraries that they oversaw. Their article concluded that most provosts saw the library as involved in campus initiative and that they preferred timely and relevant data. Murray and Ireland (2018) also noted that no other recent significant studies of provost's perceptions of academic libraries exist outside of Lynch, et al. (2007).

According to Murray and Ireland (2018, p. 359), it is "imperative to have an improved understanding of provosts' perceptions of library participation in university initiatives, the types of data that will sway provosts to support library budget requests, and how they prefer those data be communicated." Though some studies have addressed the kinds of data that helps libraries articulate their value (Oakleaf, 2010), this researcher could not locate a study that examined how this data is currently perceived by library deans or directors, nor one that discussed their preferences for using this data. While there are studies of provosts' preferences and perceptions of libraries (Lynch, et al. 2007, Murray & Ireland, 2018), there are no studies examining the preferences and perceptions of both library deans or directors and provosts over the same set of questions that could allow for a comparison between the two groups of administrators. To address this gap in the literature, this study solicits the preferences and perceptions of both provosts and academic library deans or directors concerning the library's role in student retention and success initiatives, as well as the handling of funding requests for the library. By collecting data from both groups, the study provides a more complete picture of the

current state of their organizational and managerial relationship and how it relates to the overall missions of the universities they serve.

Purpose of the Study

It is important to fill this gap in the literature because understanding the current practices and perceptions of academic library deans is critical to understanding how libraries and the provosts that supervise them can maximize their understanding of how the other operates. This should lead to better communication, which according to Public Administration management scholarship (deHaven-Smith & Jenne, 2006; Garnett, Marlowe, & Pandey, 2008) provides for improved organizational outcomes. By including the practices and preferences of library deans or directors, this study hopes to provide a picture of what kinds of data these library managers provide their provosts and what they feel their library's role is in university initiatives. By comparing this data with provosts' preferences for receiving data and their own perceptions about the library's role in university initiatives, the study provides a complete picture of the state of provosts' relationships with their library administrators and how data communication in both directions might change to improve them.

So that the provosts and academic library directors might share some common methods of operation, while still providing for variety in types of institution, this study focuses on provosts and library deans or directors within the USG. This system currently has twenty-six institutions that are grouped into four main categories: Research Universities, Comprehensive Universities, State Universities, and State Colleges (University System of Georgia, n.d.). These designations serve different missions, yet still share operational similarities under the umbrella of the USG. This further

differentiates this study from previous research projects, which surveyed provosts at the national level, as well as at both public and private institutions. This research project aims to provide some conclusions about provost and academic library directors or deans that cannot be dismissed as the product of differences in system or institutional difference.

Summary of Methodology

To gather data on the preferences and perceptions of academic library deans or directors and their provosts, this study conducted an explanatory-sequential mixed-methods investigation that involved a quantitative survey and a follow-up qualitative interview with representatives of both groups. The follow-up interview was not sent to all the people in the survey group, but the project sought to conduct interviews with at least three representatives of each group of participants. Both the survey and the follow-up interviews were structured so that both groups are asked the same types of questions, and thus, accurate comparisons might be made across the two populations.

The quantitative data collected for the study was analyzed using basic descriptive statistical analyses, while the qualitative component was analyzed using a codebook that contains inductive codes developed from the research questions and deductive codes developed during initial data analyses. Both sets of data were analyzed according to a series of assumptions developed based on the findings of Murray and Ireland (2018). Both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study also undergo tests for reliability and validity to ensure that any conclusions of the study are valid.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer several research questions with the data it collected. First, it answers what data provosts prefer to receive for funding requests and in what method they prefer to receive it. Second, it answers what data that academic library deans or directors are providing to provosts and what methods they are using to provide it. Third, it answers to what extent provosts feel the library contributes to university-wide academic success and retention initiatives and whether those perceptions are based on anecdotal or demonstrated evidence. Fourth, it answers to what extent library deans or directors feel the library contributes to university-wide academic success and retention initiatives and whether those perceptions are based on anecdotal or demonstrated evidence. Fifth, the study asks what differences there are in these preferences and perceptions at the different types of institutional designations within the USG. Though it is not a formal research question, the study also answers to what extent qualitative interviews with provosts and academic library deans or directors provide nuance and further clarification on trends found within the answers to the qualitative questions.

Summary

This study includes five chapters. Chapter 2 provides a literature review of recent changes in the world of higher education, the impact of these changes on libraries, the changing roles of provosts and library deans or directors, and an overview of communication theory in public management and how it applies to the problem. First, the chapter reviews articles that establish the changing landscape of higher education in the United States, with an emphasis on funding challenges and increasing focus on initiatives aimed at increasing student success and retention. It also discusses how these changes have impacted academic libraries. Because provosts and the deans or directors of an

academic library are the two primary administrators that are over the library at a college or university, this chapter includes a review of articles concerning their changing roles as well. The literature review also includes discussion of the few studies that have addressed the relationship between provosts and academic library directors directly and how this relationship affects practices and perceptions surrounding funding requests and library participation in university-wide initiatives for student success and retention. It also examines articles that have addressed the application of the Public Administration concept of New Public Management in higher education to understand changes going on within this area and how it might inform how library deans or directors and provosts work together. Finally, the chapter discusses the gaps in the literature on the relationship between library deans or directors and university provosts and how the study worked to address those areas and provide the foundation for future research.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the research design and methods employed by the study. Because the study utilized an explanatory-sequential mixed methods approach, detailed descriptions of both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study are discussed in this chapter. In addition, the primary research questions and assumptions for the study are discussed so that it is clear what the study hopes to evaluate and discover by conducting this line of inquiry. The manner of analysis for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study are also addressed, with explanations for the selection of descriptive statistical analyses and the creation of codes for the analysis of qualitative data. Finally, measures for the reliability and validity of both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study are also addressed.

Chapter 4 reports the results of the data analysis based on the previously discussed research design and methodology. This section includes a discussion of the results and their relationship to the initial assumptions of the study, including any unexpected results. First, descriptive statistical analyses for all the quantitative data are presented along with the demographic characteristics of the dataset. These descriptive statistical analyses were checked for alignment with the primary research assumptions based on the Murray and Ireland (2018) study. Next, the analysis of the qualitative data is presented through the presentation of the coded data. Like the quantitative data, the qualitative responses are also analyzed for alignment with the primary research assumptions of the study that were addressed in the methodology chapter.

Using the results presented previously, Chapter 5 examines the significance of the results, relates them to the body of literature discussed in the literature review, and suggests avenues for future research. In addition, there is a discussion of the limits of the scope and applicability of the study, particularly considering alternative conclusions and data found in the literature. Considering trends and in current and emerging research, the study evaluates its contribution to the higher education literature and suggest avenues for future research based on its findings. Finally, there is a summary conclusion.

Significance of the Study

This research project demonstrated the areas of commonality and difference between university provosts and academic library deans or directors. The researcher anticipated that there would be significant areas of difference, especially regarding the academic library's role in retention and student success initiatives at the university level, with provosts likely to view the library's role as less important than academic library

deans or directors. For any areas where significant differences occurred, the study recommended that library directors and deans better match the data they send with a shared vision and in keeping with library professional standards as found in recommendations from literature on New Public Management (NPM) (Frølich, 2005; Wright, 2014). The study also explored recommendations for communicating based on public administration management theory, especially under systems classified as operating under NPM for possible solutions to communicating library value to university administrators. Finally, this study demonstrated the need for more research on library deans or directors and their relationships with other campus constituencies in an era where libraries must do more to better demonstrate their value.

Chapter II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Overview

This chapter contains a review of the relevant literature concerning the changing nature of the relationship between provosts and academic library deans or directors. The review is organized into six categories that outline the problem and highlight the need for this study. The first, second, and third sections discuss the changing world of higher education and how those changes have affected the funding and budgeting of academic libraries as well as their participation in campus initiative promoting student success and retention. The fourth and fifth sections address the changing roles of provosts and library directors and why effective communication is needed for their relationship to succeed. The final section addresses the concept of New Public Management, the current attitudes in higher education as reflective of the tenets of New Public Management and suggested best practices for communication among managers within organizations operating under New Public Management ideals.

The Changing Landscape of Higher Education

Though the landscape of higher education has undergone many changes during the twentieth century, it began to evolve into its current state in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when some state governments had begun to implement performance-based budgeting for academic institutions due to issues with increasing costs and declining enrollment (Dumant, 1980). The original authors of Tennessee's performance-based

budgeting initiative cited the need to focus on institutional outcomes over growth metrics, like enrollment-based funding (Bogue & Brown, 1982). By the end of the 1980s, the National Governors Association (NGA) had signed on to the concept of outcomes assessment for secondary and higher education with their *Time for Results* publication, that highlighted the focus on assessment that was becoming prominent at the time, as well as calling for more specificity in educational outcomes (National Governors Association, 1991).

Cohen and Kisker (2010, p. 435) define the period between 1994 and 2009 as comprising “several trends and events that suggest changes affecting not only higher education, but also the world.” During this period, there was a drive for accountability in the face of rising educational costs. According to Pantuosco, Ulrich, & Pierce (2013), a substantial increase in higher education spending was not correlated with a corresponding rise in undergraduate degree attainment. When combined with the societal context of an increased focus on decreased government spending and moves to privatize government functions, higher education had to shift away from traditional models to one much more focused on outcomes relating to student success (Cohen & Kisker, 2010).

One of the outcomes that colleges have chosen to focus on during this time period and into the present has been the retention of students. According to Braxton, Doyle, Jones, McLendon, Hischy, et al. (2013, 1), “the attainment of other forms of success remain elusive without student retention.” Though not necessarily a priority at larger research universities that, according to Cohen and Kisker (2010) compete for the best and brightest students, other institutions have had to focus on this particular metric. Though it has been more popular in recent years, the scholarship on retention dates back over 75

years (Braxton, 2000). More recent scholarship on retention has noted that the problem is currently still severe, with 45% of students at community colleges and 28% at four-year schools leaving at the end of the first year (Braxton, et al., 2013).

In recent years, retention has become the gauge for student success on college campuses (Meghan, Wills, Elder, & Molina, 2018). Some of the practices shown to be effective at increasing retention are First Year Learning Communities (Colton, Connor, Shultz, & Easter, 1999; Harrington, Lloyd, Smolinski, & Shahin, 2016; Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, & Leonard, 2007; Noble, Flynn, Lee, & Hilton, 2007) as well as more general efforts to get students involved in campus culture (Allen, Robbins, Casillas, & Oh, 2008; Baker & Robnett, 2012; Hunt, Boyd, Gast, Mitchell, & Wilson, 2012; Morrow & Ackermann, 2012; Svanum & Bigatti, 2009). Other campus units, including libraries, have gotten involved in retention initiatives (Zhong & Alexander, 2007; Cox & Jantti, 2012; Soria, Fransen, & Nackerud, 2013). University provosts are also expected to be involved in the retention efforts at their institutions. Martin and Samels (2015, p. 172) note that provosts “can lead the way in modeling for deans and faculty leaders that they are critical to the enrollment effort and that their full participation is expected and will be rewarded.”

To better manage enrollment and focus on the high impact practices that lead to improved student retention, colleges and universities have begun to invest heavily in learning analytics that can provide opportunities for “targeted intervention” for students at risk of academic problems. These analytics track different behaviors electronically to better highlight when students are at risk of not being retained. For example, several studies have noted the effectiveness of attendance tracking (Lotkowski, Robbins, &

Noeth, 2004; Hassel & Lourey, 2005). Fritz (2017) incorporates the thinking of Sunstein and Thaler's (2008) *Nudge* to suggest a "Libertarian Paternalism" which provides freedom of choice while still making suggestions to students about potentially beneficial options for their academic success. Though ethical concerns have been raised concerning the usage of traditionally private data about student behavior (Rubel & Jones, 2016), Fritz (2017) points to numerous studies that have illustrated their benefits to increasing student success (Campbell, Deblois, & Oblinger, 2007; Arnold, 2010; Denley, 2012).

In addition to the problems faced by retention, the economic downturn has influenced general funding, with most schools seeing significant drops in funding during the recession. According to Barr and Turner (2013, p. 169), "A striking feature of the Great Recession is the relative shift from state support and provision of higher education to private and federal support along two margins." This has meant that, though there has been somewhat of a "buffer" in the form of aid like Pell Grants for students, most state institutions have not had a similar cushion and have seen a net decrease in expenditures per student. (Barr & Turner, 2013). As there is little evidence this trend will reverse (Barr & Turner, 2013), higher education administrators will find themselves forced to be more strategic in allocating resources, which has major implications for both academic library deans or directors and university provosts.

Academic Library Funding and Budgeting

Academic libraries, in the context of their roles in the larger university, have not been immune from the changes occurring in higher education, especially where funding is concerned. As Woodward (2014) observed, the costs of higher education have risen dramatically and there have been several budget challenges at colleges and universities as

a result. As these challenges have appeared at institutions, they have appeared in the libraries that serve the institutions, which has resulted in changes in the ways in which libraries have prioritized what they fund.

Though some blame for academic library budgeting shifts has been placed on the 2008 economic downturn (Pritchard, 2009), some research points to tightening library budgets well before that year. Shorb & Driscoll (2004) identified budget cuts big enough to noticeably impact library services going back as far as 2001. However, in recent years, the decline in library budgets has been precipitous. According to Lowry (2011), academic research libraries in the United States saw a decline in total funding of less than 15% from 2009-2011 and 13 of the 20 saw cuts greater than 20% over the same period. These budget cuts have continued beyond the years of the recession, with some institutions still experiencing cuts in 2015 (Enoch & Harker, 2015). Further, Lowry (2011) argues that these cuts should no longer be considered aberrations, but rather should represent a new baseline in the way that libraries will be funded going forward.

While the decline in funding in academic libraries has remained constant in recent years, the ways in which they choose to respond to the problem does appear to be shifting. This shift seems to be divided into budgeting prior to the economic downturn of 2008 and budgeting after the downturn. Prior to the downturn, there were a several articles in library journals about package deals with database vendors that were meant to save money (Botero, Carrico, & Tennant, 2008; Drake, 2007; Kohl & Sanville, 2006). After the downturn, there was a major re-evaluation of this practice in the library literature, with several articles calling for the cancellation or re-evaluation of database

vendors considering continued budget cuts (Enoch & Harker, 2015; Erb & Hunter, 2015; Fought, 2014; Nabe & Fowler, 2012).

One other important focus that has appeared in the literature on academic libraries and budget cuts is the use of data management tools for efficient expenditures on staffing and library materials (Dinkins, 2011; Goben & Raszewski, 2015; Trail, 2013). There is also a recent focus in the professional literature towards academic libraries “demonstrating their value” through increased collection of assessment data that began in earnest with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) publication “The Value of Academic Libraries: A Comprehensive Research Review and Report” (Oakleaf, 2010). Though this theme has become more popular in recent years, in 2007, Eric Ackerman wrote a report on Assessment in Academic Libraries that has come to define projects like the ACRL Report (Oakleaf, 2010). In this report, he notes, “For funding decisions, libraries should pitch their needs in terms of how they will affect student outcomes and success, and how those needs are central to their respective universities missions.” (Ackerman, 2007, p. 21).

Library Participation in Retention and Success Initiatives

In addition to the major impacts on how academic libraries are funded and how they allocate these funds, the changing landscape of higher education has also had a major impact on the academic library’s role in campus-wide initiatives that involve student success and retention. These efforts are tied to the previously discussed focus on data management for staffing and materials to help solve library budgeting problems (Dinkins, 2011; Goben & Raszewski, 2015; Trail, 2013) in that they too rely on data management tools to prove their success. As Lynch et al. (2007, p. 213) note, the library

can no longer rely on its traditional place as the “heart of the campus” and instead must rely on the functional ways it can contribute to the university’s mission if it wishes to continue to secure funding. Calvert (1994) also lamented that libraries were not effective in communicating their value because they focused on data collection for items that were not useful to the whole institution. One way that libraries can contribute to their institutional mission is through contributing to the increasingly important focus on student retention and success initiatives. Oliveira (2017, p. 314) argues that the library certainly has a role to play in these processes, because “it takes a whole university to educate a student.”

Libraries have been studying how they can contribute to retention and success initiatives for some time. There are some studies that noted factors important to retention that are related to the academic library from over thirty years ago (Churchill & Iwai, 1981; Russell, Sturgeon, Prather, & Greene, 1982). However, one of the first detailed articles that directly addressed the libraries role in student retention appeared over twenty years ago (Kelly, 1995). This report noted the academic library was a vital piece of an academic community where students were coming for help and wondered whether libraries should “be part of a students’ experience at a university from the first day” (Kelly, 1995, p. 757). The article suggested that the best way forward for library participation at the time was to participate in introductory freshman seminars in conjunction with other departments on campus (Kelly 1995). Kelly (1995) also noted the relative lack of any data about the relationship between libraries and student retention and noted that getting this data would be an important first step in determining how the academic library could better contribute to these initiatives (Kelly, 1995).

Another key component for student success in which libraries have been active has been cultivating student proficiencies in information literacy. A recent study by Petermanec and Šebjan (2018) found that students who are more proficient in information literacy skills have higher success rates in college coursework. The role of information literacy in student success is also beginning to show in the area of high impact practices as well, most notably in information literacy components within first year programs (Marineo & Shi, 2019). The recent introduction of the Association of College and Research Libraries' (2015) *Framework for Information Literacy* also provides opportunities for the library to further utilize information literacy as a tool for student success. Like Marineo and Shi (2019), Insua, Lantz, and Armstrong (2018) conducted a study on the importance of information literacy instruction in first year writing assignments, with an emphasis on how the framework helped them solve particular challenges.

It is also important to note that the role of the library in retention is not always viewed positively. In a study on library contribution to retention, Matthews (2007) found that there was no evidence that library usage was linked to learning or academic success and that any correlation between the two was weak at best. Though later studies (Cox & Jantti, 2012; Soria et al., 2013; Wong & Webb, 2011; Wong & Cmor, 2011; Zhong & Alexander, 2007) have focused on trying to better establish the correlation, Matthews (2007) is not alone in criticizing the library's reporting process. Cohen & Kisker (2010) were equally skeptical of library efforts to quantify the effects of the library on retention as ignoring the whole college experience. They note "Digging around for the unique

effects of particular experiences on categories of individuals is a futile exercise.” (Cohen & Kisker, 2010, p. 505).

Since those initial forays into the role academic libraries can play in retaining students and ensuring they are academically successful, there has been much more written on the topic. Several studies have examined the role that the library space plays in student retention (Bean, 2003; Booth, Schofield, & Tiffen, 2012; Matthews, Adams, & Gannaway, 2008; May & Swabey, 2015) focusing on how students using library spaces for both study and socialization helps them persist at an institution. Numerous studies have cited the library’s role in increasing GPA and other academic indicators, with varying degrees of correlation (Cox & Jantti, 2012; Soria et al., 2013; Thorpe, Lukes, Bever, & He, 2016; Wong & Webb, 2011, Wong & Cmor, 2011; Zhong & Alexander, 2007). Increasing student’s research competencies through library-led instruction sessions on research skills has shown to be effective in increasing retention as well (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016; Hubbard & Loos, 2013; Pagowsky & Hammond, 2012). Other articles have suggested possible partnerships with other academic institutions to increase retention (Allen, 2014, Hardesty, 2007; Mahaffy, 2008; Nelson, Quinn, Marrington, & Clarke, 2012).

Though these methods of assessing the impact of the academic library on student success and retention initiatives at colleges and universities have appeared more often in the library literature, there have been arguments against implementing these measures at universities as well (Hicks, 2015; Lilburn, 2017; Jones & Salo, 2018; Seale, 2017).

Lilburn (2017) takes issue with the approach of trying to quantify and count what the library does and questions whether this is the right methodology for assessing the

library's mission. Jones and Salo (2018, p. 316) heavily critique the applications of learning analytics solutions in academic libraries and argue that they, "present significant conflicts with the ALA's Code of Ethics with respect to privacy, intellectual freedom, and intellectual property rights." Seale (2017) critiques the application of so much data to library work as ignoring much of what librarians do through emotional/affective labor and relationship building and reducing it to simple counts of events. She notes "What would assessment in terms of relationship-building look like? Might it more accurately capture what we do as librarians and what students get out of meeting with or talking to librarians?" (Seale, 2017, p. 143).

It is important to note that these authors, though they critique current models of assessing academic library contributions to metrics like retention and student success, are not against assessing library contributions altogether. Lilburn argues that library assessment should not focus on "counting measuring, and quantifying" but instead "should respect the values that underpin higher education, including shared governance, academic freedom, and service to the public good" (2017, p. 104). Seale (2017) makes frequent mention of assessment that looked more at the relationships that retention scholars like Vincent Tinto (1993) have noted play a major role in students' decisions to remain at an institution. Though Jones and Salo (2018) identify potential ethical problems with the data collected by Learning Analytics initiatives, they also discuss how librarians can insert their values into learning analytics and collect more ethical data.

Changing Role of Provosts on University Campuses

Though librarians have important views on how to participate in university-wide initiatives, they are still part of a larger body in which their actions are often overseen by

a university administrator. On most campuses, academic libraries are ultimately overseen by the university provost, also known as the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) (Robertson, 2015). Like other units and positions on campus, the roles fulfilled by university provosts have had to adapt the changes in higher education brought on by tightening budgets and an increased focus on concepts like retention, student success, and the data-driven world of learning analytics.

According to Cook, Nellum, and Billings (2015), it is possible to argue that the academic position most responsible for achieving the goals set by the changes facing higher education is the provost, who was traditionally responsible for supervising the academic faculty and maintaining the school's vision for its academic programs. These authors note that this role has broadened considerably since the 1990s, and now includes more administrative duties including strategic planning and enrollment management (Cook, et al., 2015). This might be related to the changing roles of university presidents, who are increasingly called on to manage the external relationships of the university, leaving the provosts to manage most of the internal affairs of the institution, which leads them to be a major factor in their success (Cook, et al., 2015).

One of the most important documents that outlines just how the role of provost has changed in recent years is *The CAO Census*, which was the first national survey of provosts and was carried out by the American Council on Education (Eckel, Cook, & King, 2009). According to this report, there are important distinctions to be found in how provosts at different types of institutions spend their time (Eckel, et al., 2009). At two-year schools and community colleges, the CAOs tended to be more focused on managing enrollment and developing students than at traditional four-year universities. CAOs at

those institutions reported spending much more time on managing budgets and strategic planning (Eckel, et al., 2009). Because of declining budgets associated with the recession, “it may be that CAOs of four-year institutions are increasingly forced to come up with creative ways not only to promote the academic mission of their institutions but also to maintain the administrative functions with fewer resources” (Cook, et al., 2015, p. 13).

One campus unit that provosts have had to figure out how to balance academic mission and decreasing funding with is the academic library. As Lynch et al. (2007) noted before the 2008 economic downturn, libraries could no longer rely on their traditional image as the academic center of a campus and instead found themselves having to justify what they do to provosts who are increasingly spending time on budgetary and strategic issues or issues related to student success and retention (Cook, et al., 2015, p. 13). Lynch et. al (2007) also noted CAOs felt that library directors should sit as an equal on deans’ councils and were very conscious of the need for the library to be a part of the academic mission of the university.

Changing Roles of Library Deans or Directors in Academic Libraries

In addition to the changing roles of top-level university administrators including presidents and provosts, other university officials have seen their positions transformed by the changing world of higher education. One administrative position that has seen their role on campus shift in response is the academic library director or dean. According to Fagan (2012), discerning what makes for effective library leadership is difficult to define, though studies that have tried have focused on sets of tasks and duties.

Though literature on leadership in libraries extends back nearly as long as literature on libraries, this study will only look at more recent literature to show how the

position has changed with other major events that affected other areas in this literature review, such as the economic downturn of 2008. One recent literature review on leadership in academic libraries chose to break studies up into pre-2005 and post-2005 categories (Fagan, 2012) In the pre-2005 studies, there was a concerted effort to try and define what constituted good academic leadership. As Rosser, Johnsrud, and Heck(2003, p. 3) noted, most of the earlier literature on academic leadership was interested in “specific tasks and challenges.” To counter this, Rosser et al. (2003) surveyed a majority of faculty and staff at a research campus about their attitudes towards deans. The study concluded that effective leadership focused on both outcomes attainment and knowledge of the complex social exchange of the university.

A study by Marietta del Favero in 2005 also concluded that there was little agreement on what constituted good leadership in higher education (del Favero, 2005). This study sent out a survey to academic deans at 421 research universities to determine leadership qualities (del Favero, 2005). Most notably, this study found that deans in smaller programs or more applied programs relied heavily on social behavior. This would apply to academic directors and deans as well, since their areas have less defined paradigms (del Favero, 2005).

Since 2005, Fagan (2012, p. 5) noted that the literature on academic library leadership has focused on five primary areas: emotional intelligence, attitudes of presidents and provosts, perceptions of Generation X Librarians, evidence-based library management, and the use and awareness of the Association for College and Research Libraries *Standards for Higher Education*. Of these, the literature concerning the attitudes of presidents and provosts as well as the push for evidence-based library

management highlight the need for the proposed study on provosts and academic library deans or directors. According to Lynch et al., who repeated a similar study on provost attitudes conducted in 1992, most library directors had been called on by their provosts to participate in university affairs, assist in forwarding the university's agenda, or provide information for university-wide governance and planning. (2007). This was a marked increase from the two provosts who said they had requested such services from their library directors in the 1992 study (Grimes, 1993).

A study of evidence-based practices among library leaders conducted by Amos Lakos confirms some of the findings of Lynch et al. (Lakos, 2007). In this study, Lakos (2007) found that deans or directors at major research institutions felt their directors were interested in benchmarks and rankings, though they also felt that administrators did not want very detailed data concerning them. Lakos (2007) also found that library administrators felt that university administrators were increasingly interested in outcomes data, but that the library was not necessarily seen as part of those outcomes. Finally, this study also found directors becoming more aware of the need for good data that they could rely on, with nearly half of the respondents indicating they had created or were in the process of creating library positions focused on assessment (Lakos, 2007). As Lakos (2007) and Lynch et al. (2007) illustrate, the roles of academic library deans or directors are shifting to a new focus that is broader and focused on university goals and the data needed to illustrate how the library is relevant to that mission to university administrators, including provosts.

Existing Literature on Provosts' and Academic Library Deans' Perceptions of Academic Libraries

The literature shows that both provosts and academic library deans or directors have seen their roles change with the shifting landscape of higher education. However, few studies have examined the attitudes of these administrators regarding how they approach each other and what they perceive the role of the academic library on a university campus should be. This literature review could only uncover three studies from the past decade that examined provost's perceptions of and preferences for working with academic libraries. None of these studies examine what academic library deans or directors are doing to compare with provosts' attitudes, but they do provide important data about provosts and academic libraries that will provide the basis for this study.

The first study by Lynch et al. (2007), examines the attitudes of presidents and provosts about the university library. The authors of this study were primarily concerned with the idea that the traditional view of the academic library as "the heart of the campus" was no longer true in the present day (Lynch et al., 2007). Their study replicated a 1992 project about the centrality of the university library so that they could measure shifts in attitudes about the concept (Grimes, 1993; Lynch et al, 2007). The study found that while presidents and provosts still found the library to be important on campus, they also felt that the library needed to do more to justify this role and that, "To secure support, the library must now demonstrate how it serves the university mission." (Lynch et al., 2007, 226)

Robertson's (2015) study of Canadian provosts at research intensive universities focused on how they perceived libraries aligning with the institution's mission, the future

of libraries, and what they thought indicators of success might be for libraries. This qualitative study featured interviews with nine provosts and found general agreement that libraries were critical to their university's missions of research and student learning (Robertson, 2015). However, most provosts in the study were only aware of the passive roles the library played in these missions, such as providing access to the scholarly material needed for research and learning (Robertson, 2015). The study also indicated that most of the provosts saw the future of libraries as one in which collections moved out of the building and the remaining space was reimagined to support student learning (Robertson, 2015). Most importantly, Robertson's study alludes to indicators that provosts think are indicative of successful libraries and notes "such indicators were seen to be hard to come by" and that provosts "seemed just as influenced by informal stakeholder feedback" as basic library usage data (Robertson, 2015, p. 508).

Murray and Ireland's (2018) study of provosts' perceptions and preferences regarding academic libraries focuses on the types of data provosts prefer to see as well as their perceptions about academic libraries' role in university initiatives for retention and student success. Their nationwide survey of provosts received nearly 200 responses from provosts at a wide range of public and private institutions (Murray & Ireland, 2018). While their results confirm the conclusions of Robertson (2015) and Lynch et al. (2007), they do find that provosts tend to see the library as only somewhat involved in retention efforts and only marginally involved in recruitment efforts (Murray & Ireland, 2018). Notably, Murray and Ireland found that provosts saw little value in library usage and user satisfaction data, noting that provosts preferred data from annual reports and budget meetings (2018). Finally, they note that the more "emphatic influence" comes from

“correlational data to retention, success, and even evidence of learning information literacy skills” (Murray & Ireland, 2018, p. 359). Murray and Ireland’s study highlights the critical need to understand how well the data that academic library deans or directors are currently providing their CAOs matches up with their preferences.

Though there are few studies that examine provosts’ attitudes and perceptions of academic libraries, there are none that directly examine this relationship from the viewpoint of the academic library dean or director. Fagan (2012) does discuss the importance of the literature concerning provosts’ attitudes towards the library but does not point to any studies that address the perceptions or practices of academic library deans or directors when dealing with the provosts’ office. Lakos (2007) does mention that library deans or directors had noticed an increased focus on outcomes assessment coming from university administrators, though the article does not address what, if anything the library administrators were doing as a result. The lack of information about this side of the provost/library dean or director relationship illustrates a significant gap in the research that this study addressed

Though there is little in the literature that directly addresses the relationship between provosts and academic library deans and directors from the perspective of the library administrators, there is one article in the literature that provides a comprehensive examination about library deans’ outlook for the future of libraries that can provide useful background information. Meier (2016) interviewed forty library deans from American Association of Universities (AAU) schools and asked them nine questions in a one-hour qualitative interview format. Though the interviews did not touch on retention and success directly, they did discuss funding requests, noting that fundraising and grant

seeking were becoming more important as university budgets became more constrained (Meier, 2016). Most importantly, the study concluded that academic library leaders were slowly moving the library to be an institution that was more in line with university strategic priorities (Meier, 2016).

New Public Management Theory and its Application to the Problem

Though some studies have examined the relationship between provosts and academic library deans or directors from the perspective of provosts, none have attempted to place the issues facing higher education or the strategies used to solve them in the larger context of a theory of administration. By placing the issue in a larger context, researchers can gain the benefit of a conceptual framework for analyzing solutions. The framework can help provide examples beyond the specific situation under analysis that are still relevant. Because colleges and universities are largely public institutions, looking to theories within the discipline of public administration can provide new insight to familiar problems in the world of higher education.

The current focus in higher education on performance, efficiency, and proving value echo the philosophical hallmarks of the public administration concept of New Public Management (NPM). According to Gadkari (2009, p. 66), researchers have typically grouped their traits of the concept into six broad focus areas: increased productivity, market competition, service orientation, decentralization, separating policy making from implementation, and accountability. The literature involving higher education and academic libraries suggests the presence of these components in the administration of academic institutions. Academic library literature suggests an increased focus on a service orientation and accountability, as well as an increased expectation of

productivity. (Lynch et al., 2007; Lilburn, 2017; Murray & Ireland, 2018; Oakleaf, 2010). Increased implementation of performance-based funding (Woodward, 2014) and increased CAO focus on strategic planning, budgeting, and student success (Cook, et al., 2015) suggest that the concept is present throughout the university campus as well.

Viewing the current state of academic institutions as an example of the concepts of New Public Management in action provides the opportunity to examine the literature for studies that might shed new light on how to make the relationship between provosts and academic library deans or directors more effective. Some studies such as Frølich (2005) and Wright (2014) directly address how New Public Management concepts were implemented and communicated in universities. Others (Hansen, 2011; Plotnikof, 2016; Eckerd & Snider, 2017) offer up potential insight into how managers should manage relationships with other management and employees within NPM systems. This study proposes to analyze its results through the lens of New Public Management for better insight into the problems and for potential solutions to the issues confronting provosts and academic library deans or directors.

Summary

A review of the literature confirms that there is a changing environment on college campuses that has been accelerated by declines in funding brought about by the 2008 economic recession, though the changes had begun much earlier. The tighter budgets have brought about an increased focus on assessment and student success as universities try to keep their enrollment stable and allocate limited funding efficiently. Academic libraries have had to adjust to this reality and have increasingly found themselves having to provide increased justification for budget requests, including

showing how the request fits the mission of the university. Library directors and the Provosts they traditionally report to have to be keenly aware of these issues to operate efficiently in this environment. Despite this need, there have not been many studies of the relationship between these two university administrators and they have focused almost exclusively on the provost side of the pair. In addition, no study has examined this relationship in relation to the Public Administration concept of New Public Management, which could provide insights for managing this relationship that have not previously appeared in the library or higher education leadership literature.

Chapter 3 addresses the topics covered in this literature review and shows how the study proposes to address the existing gaps in the literature concerning the relationship between academic library deans or directors and university provosts or CAOs. Murray and Ireland's (2018) work has established some baseline data for provost perceptions and preferences for academic libraries. This study builds on that foundation and proposes to provide information about academic library deans' or directors' perceptions and preferences for working with provosts as well. It also collected data on the kinds of information that the library deans or directors are currently providing to their provosts. The study also focused on the universities and colleges within a single university system, the USG. Though the missions of the individual institutions are different, they are all public universities that operate under the same state government and university system that provide them all with a common set of rules and political realities. It is hoped that this scope for the study provided some common ground for analyzing the preferences and perceptions of both groups while still allowing the inherent differences in institutional mission to be demonstrated.

Chapter III
METHODOLOGY
Overview

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between university provosts and academic library deans or directors, especially regarding their attitudes toward library funding requests and perceptions about the library's participation in campus-wide initiatives. It focuses on academic library funding requests and the library's role in campus-wide enrollment and retention initiatives. With the changing landscape of higher education discussed in the literature review, it is important for both provosts and academic library deans or directors to understand how campus units fit in with the entire university's mission and how to ensure budget requests and allocations are aligned with this mission as well. By gathering data on current provost interactions with academic library deans or directors, this study hopes to find what is working and what can be improved to make these relationships as effective as possible.

This chapter addresses the methods that were used to gather and report on the data for the study. An explanatory-sequential mixed methods approach was used for this research project to supply more context to the research questions than traditional quantitative research could provide. Creswell (2014, p. 224) describes this approach as “a two-phase project in which the researcher collects quantitative data in the first phase and then uses the results to plan (or build on to) the second, qualitative phase.” It is categorized as explanatory because, “initial quantitative data results are explained further

with qualitative research.” It should be noted that the quantitative and qualitative components are analyzed separately in this approach, using the quantitative results to plan the qualitative follow-up (Creswell, 2014).

Research Design

After receiving initial Institutional Research Board approval (Appendix I), a initial email solicitation to take a survey was sent to university provosts and academic library deans or directors (Appendix A & C). This survey was managed through the online survey platform, Qualtrics, and served as the quantitative portion of the study for this project (Appendix B & D), while follow-up interviews with representatives from both groups were used for the qualitative portion (Appendix E & F). According to Hesse-Biber (2010), mixed-methods research is a valuable approach for the combination of data and allows the researcher to bring narrative context to provide further meaning to numbers.” It is hoped that the interview portion of this project did as Hesse-Biber (2010) suggests and provides much needed narrative context to the trends that are identified within the survey responses. The study was built on this premise, as the interview questions were formed in part by the results from the quantitative survey.

Survey Questions

The survey questions were developed from the survey found in Murray and Ireland’s (2018) study of provost preferences for interacting with academic libraries. Their questions focus on the data used for library funding requests and provost perceptions of academic library participation in university-wide recruitment and retention efforts (Murray & Ireland, 2018). Because their questions were directed only at provosts (Murray & Ireland, 2018), this study modified their question set to ask similar questions

to both provosts and academic library deans or directors. Surveying provosts and academic library deans or directors with the same question set provides a reliable way to measure the perceptions and preferences of both groups. It also provides clear indications of where any differences between the two groups might arise.

The initial interview schedule for both groups was developed from the quantitative survey questions to ensure that the interviews were measuring the same research questions as the quantitative component of the study. In keeping with the explanatory-sequential model (Creswell, 2014), the qualitative interview questions were directed by the findings of the quantitative survey. They asked for more information and examples related to the initial survey to provide additional context to the quantitative component of the project. In addition, follow-ups and additional questions were developed based on the quantitative findings. Hesse-Biber (2010) suggests that this approach is the strength of the mixed-methods design.

Procedure

The survey collected data from the twenty-six colleges and universities that comprise the University System of Georgia (USG). The study used a census of this group of institutions as survey recipients because the system contains several different institutional classifications that are nevertheless under the same governmental system. Because the system contains a relatively small number of institutions, the study aimed to receive a 50% response rate to obtain a reliable sample size. Earlier studies (Lynch, et al., 2007; Murray & Ireland, 2018) had a national focus that does provide more data points but could include large differences in preferences between public and private universities as well as state funding models and governance structures for public institutions.

Concentrating on a single state university system helped to provide a more uniform experience among the institutions, while still bringing out the unique missions of different institutional classifications. The follow-up interviews sought to obtain responses from at least three provosts and three library deans or directors from the sample that responded to the quantitative component of the study.

Research Questions

The survey and the follow up interview schedule were designed to answer the research questions that guided this project. This study addressed five primary research questions that were answered by the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study:

1. What kinds of data do provosts find most effective when considering library funding requests and how do they want to receive this data?
2. What role do provosts see the academic library playing in campus-wide retention and student success initiatives and is this perception based on anecdotal or documented evidence, or a mixture of both?
3. What kinds of data are academic library deans or directors including with funding requests made to the provost's office and how are they providing it?
4. What role do academic library deans or directors see the library playing in campus-wide retention and student success initiatives and is this perception based on anecdotal or documented evidence, or a mixture of both?

5. Is there a relationship between the attitudes and actions of provosts and library deans or directors concerning retention and student success initiatives or funding requests and institutional designation?

In addition to the research questions from the quantitative portion of the study, the qualitative portion of the study sought to answer to what extent and in what ways do qualitative interviews with provosts and library deans or directors serve to provide a more nuanced understanding of the trends identified by the quantitative portion of the study? These research questions were guided by New Public Management (NPM) studies that stressed the importance of shared vision for success in NPM environments, especially those in higher education (Frølich, 2005; Wright, 2014). The structure of the research allowed for the comparison between the groups to ensure the best methods for bridging any differences that came about in the data analysis.

Research Assumptions

This study made the following assumptions for each research question based on the results of the Murray and Ireland (2018) study:

1. Provosts will most prefer demonstrated correlation of any funding request with increased retention or success metrics and will most prefer to receive this data in the format of an annual budget presentation.
2. Provosts will primarily see the library as somewhat involved in retention and success initiatives and this attitude will be based predominantly on anecdotal data.
3. Academic library deans or directors will include usage data more than any other kind in making funding requests and will provide this data most through annual reports.

4. Academic library deans or directors will primarily see the library as somewhat involved in retention and success initiatives and this attitude will be based predominantly on anecdotal data.

It should be noted that no research assumption was created for the fifth research question because USG's institutional designations do not always match up with Carnegie classifications or enrollment sizes and were therefore not directly comparable with the results from Murray and Ireland (2018).

Data Analysis

The quantitative surveys were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics present in the Qualtrics platform. The analyses were based on those carried out by Murray and Ireland (2018), though the smaller sample sizes mean that the chi-square analyses they carried out would not be valid for this study. The descriptive statistical analyses allowed the responses with the highest and lowest responses to be identified for each question, as well as frequency distribution of respondents who chose a particular response. Using descriptive statistics provided the basic answers to the study's research questions that can then be used as the basis for qualitative exploration in the interview phase. The responses were then compared with the initial assumptions previously discussed in this chapter to determine how well the data supports or disproves them.

Finally, trends from the initial quantitative analysis were used to inform the qualitative questions. If clear trends in the quantitative data were found, questions about those trends were added as follow-up questions to the relevant primary topics in the interview schedule. Follow-up questions for the qualitative component of the study were developed for any areas in which the quantitative dataset seemed to suggest preferences

or perceptions among provosts or library deans or directors that disproved the study's initial assumptions that were developed from previous research on the topic.

The decision to use interviews that are transcribed and coded for the qualitative part of the study comes from the research design of Robertson (2015), who interviewed nine provosts at Canadian universities and then coded their replies to analyze the data. However, the structure of the interviews was formulated on the research questions for this study rather than the interview structure found in Robertson (2015). Though this study used the concept of interviews and coding of transcripts, it did not make use of software to generate the codes as in Robertson (2015). This study used a codebook based on its primary research questions that was supplemented with codes developed during data analysis as suggested by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) (Appendix G).

The qualitative component of the study was based in phenomenological research, which Creswell (2014, p. 14) describes as “a design of inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants.” This approach was chosen because the goal of the study was to understand the lived experiences that have led to the perceptions and preferences of provosts and library deans or directors concerning library funding requests and the library's participation in university initiatives. This research approach should finish with the essence of the experience for the individuals who have all experienced the phenomena in question (Creswell, 2014). Phenomenological research is typically conducted through interviews (Creswell, 2014), which was the method of qualitative data collection employed by this study.

The qualitative portion of the data was analyzed through coding of interview responses. The codebook was constructed using the methods employed by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006). Using a codebook for this study was critical, as it was in Fereday and Muir-Cochrane “because it served as a data management tool for organizing segments of similar or related text to assist in interpretation.” (2006, 84). In addition, by employing a codebook, this study could insure that there is a trail of evidence that helps further establish the study’s reliability (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). When developing the initial codes, each individual code contained a code label, a definition of the theme and its concern, and a description of how to recognize the theme when it occurs in the data being analyzed (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

Most codes were established using a process known as deductive coding. According to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), deductive coding is an *a priori* approach to qualitative data analysis that constructs the codes and codebook for data prior to analyzing the data. In the Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) study, codes were developed based on the research questions and theoretical framework. In a similar fashion, the initial codebook for this study was built using the research questions and this study’s assumptions that come from the findings from Murray and Ireland (2018).

Though the study primarily relies on codes developed *a priori* to examining the dataset, there were also codes that emerged during data analysis. The process of creating codes during content analysis is known as inductive coding. According to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, “During the coding of transcripts, inductive codes were assigned to segments of data that described a new theme observed in the text” (2006, p. 88). As potential themes not identified in this study’s initial codebook were identified, they were

added to the initial deductive codebook, either as additions to existing codes or completely new categories. With each new code or addition that was added during this phase of content analysis, definitions and examples from the content that fit the code were developed to ensure that the meaning of the new codes did not drift during further examination of the qualitative data.

Reliability and Validity

With any study, it is important to establish that the methods lead to both reliable and valid results. To ensure the quantitative portion of the survey was valid, this study used a survey instrument that was used in a previous study that measured provost attitudes on academic libraries (Murray & Ireland, 2018) to ensure that results remain consistent across both studies. However, because that survey did not cover academic library deans or directors, the study used construct validity as well to determine if the scores serve a useful purpose for practical application (Creswell, 2014).

The qualitative portion used member checking to help establish validity. Creswell (2014) notes that this procedure involves taking parts of polished data back to participants to ensure it accurately reflects their responses. According to Creswell (2014), member checking is sharing parts of the polished data with the study's participants to determine if they are an accurate representation of their contributions. Because this researcher is currently serving as an academic librarian in the USG, member checking also serves as a way for this researcher to clarify, acknowledge, and check for any implicit bias in the interpretation of the qualitative data (Creswell, 2014). Member checking for this study was conducted in two ways, depending on the preference of the interviewee. Either transcripts or tables with the total code tally and the codebook were

provided to all interview subjects. No interview subject disagreed with how the data or transcripts of the interview represented their interpretation of their answers. Therefore, member checking revealed this methodology to be a valid line of inquiry into the research topic.

To ensure that the coded qualitative data is reliable, the study employed a check for intercoder reliability. According to Krippendorff (2012), it is critically important to establish reliability in qualitative research because if the content analysis of qualitative data cannot be shown to be reliable, it cannot be trusted. One traditional way to establish reliability in a qualitative study is through checking intercoder reliability. According to Klenke, Martin, and Wallace (2016, 107), “Intercoder reliability is assessed by having two or more coders categorize units of analysis (articles, stories, words, and speeches, etc.) and then using the categorizations to calculate a numerical index agreement between or among the coders.” The measurement of intercoder reliability this study uses is known as Krippendorff’s alpha, which considers variables like chance and the magnitude of coder misalignment, as well as its applicability to small data sizes and numbers of coders. (Klenke, et al., 2016).

In addition, the codebook contained strict definitions that were checked by this researcher to ensure coding definitions did not drift during qualitative data analysis. To achieve this, the codebook used for coding interview transcripts contained definitions, notes, and example codes to help guide the coding process and keep it consistent (Appendix G). The codebook was present for all coders to further assist in establishing intercoder reliability. Both intercoder reliability and code checking are recommended by Creswell (2014) as measures to increase the reliability of a qualitative study.

This study used three coders evaluating the same interview transcript samples to determine intercoder reliability. All three used the qualitative codebook and were trained on the study and procedures for evaluation. The codes that each coder selected were combined into a single dataset which is used to calculate Krippendorff's α within IBM's SPSS software. According to Klenke, et al. (2016), a score on this measure of .90 or better would be acceptable to all, while .80 or better would be acceptable in most situations, with .70 or better being acceptable for exploratory research. While higher scores are certainly an aspiration, Klenke et al. (2016) established that a successful measure of intercoder reliability for this exploratory research study would be a .70 or better using Krippendorff's α .

Three coders were used to determine intercoder reliability. A sample of 10% of the total amount of qualitative data was used in the material used to calculate the reliability score. Each coder was given the same sample of qualitative data from the provost and library dean or director interviews. After this process was completed, the codes were given a numeric value and placed in an IBM SPSS dataset for analysis. Running the analyses on the dataset resulted in a Krippendorff's α of .82, which exceeded the target of .70 established in Klenke, et al. (2016) as an acceptable level of reliability for an exploratory study and exceeded the .80 threshold that represents good reliability for an explanatory study (Appendix H).

Summary

This chapter has presented an overview of the methods that were used to carry out the proposed research. The study followed an explanatory-sequential mixed-methods design as described by Creswell (2014), containing a quantitative portion that is collected

first and informs a qualitative portion that is conducted after. The quantitative portion consisted of a survey distributed to a census of the USG colleges and universities and was analyzed using basic descriptive statistical analysis. The qualitative portion of the study consisted of one-on-one interviews with a sample of the survey recipients and was analyzed using codes based on the study's research questions and assumptions and those that emerged from initial analysis of interview transcripts. Both measures were checked for reliability and validity to ensure that any conclusions about the provost/library dean or director relationship were useful for improving the collaboration between these two academic administrators.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

Overview

The initial quantitative survey was sent out to all twenty-six library deans or directors and all twenty-six provosts in the University System of Georgia (USG) on November 1, 2018 (Appendix A & C). The survey was left open until December 31st, 2018 and during that time it received responses from 14 provosts and 16 academic library deans or directors, for response rates of 53% for provosts and 61% for library directors. Both figures exceeded the target 50% response rate outlined in the methodology. All survey responses were complete.

Though the sample size met the goals of the project, the numbers do not provide a large enough sample to conduct thorough inferential statistical analyses. Because of this, this research project utilized basic descriptive statistical analysis for the responses. This approach mirrors the analyses found in Murray and Ireland (2018). In addition, these analyses served as the basis for the qualitative interviews that comprise the second part of an explanatory-sequential mixed methods study.

Demographic Information

The first survey question asked respondents to identify the USG institutional designation for the institution they worked for. There were respondents from each institutional designation within the USG among both provosts and library deans or directors. Among provosts, there were two responses from Research Universities, three from Comprehensive Universities, six from State Universities, and three from State Colleges. Three responses came from provosts who worked at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) within the system. Among library deans or directors, there were two responses from Research Universities, three from Comprehensive Universities, five from State Universities, and six from State Colleges. Only one library dean or director worked for an HBCU (Table 1).

Table 1. *Institutional designation of survey respondents.*

Designation	Provosts	% of Total Responses	Deans/Directors	% of Total Responses
Research University	2	14.29%	2	12.50%
Comprehensive University	3	21.43%	3	18.75%
State University	6	42.86%	5	31.25%
State College	3	21.43%	6	37.50%
HBCU	3	21.43%	1	6.25%

In addition to a question about institutional designation, the survey also asked respondents other demographic questions. Provosts were asked three demographic questions, while library deans or directors were asked four, with the additional question addressing whether they were considered library deans, directors, or something else in their official job title. The first demographic question examined the size of the student population at the respondent's institution. The provost responses came primarily from the smaller schools within the system, with nearly 72% of respondents representing schools

of less than 10,000 students, which is slightly higher than the 61% that these schools represent in the actual population of schools (University System of Georgia, 2018).

Library deans or directors were much closer to the actual breakdown of schools in the USG, with 62.5% of respondents coming from the smallest schools.

Table 2. *Survey respondents by student population.*

Student Population	Provosts	% of Responses	Deans/Directors	% of Responses
0-10,000	10	71.43%	10	62.50%
10,001-20,000	2	14.29%	3	18.75%
20,001-30,000	1	7.14%	1	6.25%
30,001+	1	7.14 %	2	12.50%

The next question asked respondents to disclose the faculty status of librarians at their institution. The provosts' responses to this question indicated a fairly even distribution between institutions with some mix of either tenure-track or non-tenure track faculty and professional or classified staff, or just staff. Few had just faculty and no classified staff. Among provosts who responded, nine of 14 responses did not have tenure track faculty at all, while among library deans or directors, ten of the sixteen responses did not have tenure track faculty. Interestingly, among deans or directors responding to the survey, a much higher number (11 of 16) indicated that they only had faculty and no classified staff. The survey was not designed to be able to identify respondents with their specific institutions, so this discrepancy could bring up a question of whether there is some misunderstanding between provosts and library deans or directors concerning the status of librarians at their institution.

Table 3. *Librarian faculty status.*

Status	Provosts	% of Responses	Deans/Directors	% of Responses
Professional or classified staff only	4	28.57%	3	18.75%
Non-tenure track faculty only	1	7.14%	7	43.75%
Non-tenure track faculty and professional or classified staff	4	28.57%	0	0.00%
Tenure track faculty only	1	7.14%	4	25.00%
Tenure track faculty and professional or classified staff	4	28.57%	2	12.50%

Finally, the library deans and directors were asked what their title was at their institution. Most held the title of dean, with half that number holding the title of director. Though four respondents responded “other” to this question, two of these were interim deans or directors and the other was a director. Only one held a title that was not dean or director. That respondent was classed as an associate provost at their institution.

Table 4. *Dean/Director job title.*

Title	Responses	% of Responses
Dean	8	50.00%
Director	4	25.00%
Other	4	25.00%

The qualitative interview respondents included seven library deans or directors and three provosts from USG institutions. Among the seven library deans or directors, six held the title of dean, while one was a director. Two deans were from a Research

University, one each came from a comprehensive university and a state university, and two deans and one director came from state colleges. The provosts had one representative each from the comprehensive, state university, and state college levels. In order to preserve the anonymity of all responses, the enrollment numbers from the interview participants institutions will not be shared in this study. Because of scheduling conflicts and the interim status of several provosts at the Research Universities in the system, the study was not able to include a provost from a Research University among the participants.

Survey and Interview Structure

Survey respondents were asked a series of six questions that addressed the five primary research questions for the study. These questions asked about participation in various common retention and student success programs that might be occurring, whether libraries contributed to students' decisions to stay enrolled, what kinds of data was preferred when making funding requests and how that data was typically communicated. In this section, the provosts and library deans or directors were asked the same sets of questions, though the questions about data and funding requests were slightly altered to reflect the proper roles of provosts and deans or directors. For these questions, provosts were asked what data they wanted to see and how they wanted to receive it, while deans and directors were asked what data they typically provided and how they typically provided it.

In the follow up interviews, both provosts and deans or directors were asked ten questions that addressed the five primary research questions for the study. These questions were also informed by results of the quantitative survey. Because this portion

of the project was interested in gathering more information about trends identified in the quantitative data, the questions were designed to elicit examples of specific funding requests or initiative participation, if such examples were available. The interview questions were structured by theme, and addressed data preferences, participation in university initiatives, approaches to funding requests, and how their institution's official designation affected the library's role in retention.

Research Question 1: Provosts' Data Preferences for Funding Requests

The final questions in the quantitative survey for provosts focused on the first research question and addressed funding requests, the data included in the requests, and the preferred means to receive the data. Provosts rated faculty feedback, endorsement from other deans, increased retention or success metrics, and connection to increased faculty research production as the most influential, with each marked as data with "high influence" on funding decisions by 61.54% of provosts. Interestingly, focus group and anecdotal evidence, which were both marked as "would likely include" or "likely to include" by 81.25% of library deans and directors, were the least influential data sets for provosts, with anecdotal evidence being the least popular (76.93% rated as low to no influence) (Table 5).

Table 5. *Provost responses for what data they prefer in funding requests.*

Data type	High Influence	Moderate Influence	Low Influence	No Influence
Basic usage data	46.15% (6)	30.77% (4)	23.08% (3)	0%
User satisfaction data	46.15% (6)	46.15% (6)	7.69% (1)	0%
Faculty feedback	61.54% (8)	30.77% (4)	7.69% (1)	0%
Dean endorsements	61.54% (8)	23.08% (3)	15.38% (2)	0%
Correlation w/ retention	61.54% (8)	7.69% (1)	23.08% (3)	7.69% (1)
Correlation w/ faculty research	61.54% (8)	23.08% (3)	15.38% (2)	0%
Focus group data	15.38% (2)	46.15% (6)	38.46% (5)	0%
Anecdotal evidence	7.69% (1)	15.38% (2)	53.85% (7)	23.08% (3)

Provosts were also asked what they thought would be the most effective means for receiving data in a way that would increase library funding. Their responses showed a clear preference to receive data through means of an annual report (38.46%), while email was close behind (23.08%). The least popular choices for receiving data for provosts were presentations or meetings (15.38%) and annual budget meetings (7.69%). The provost who indicated “other” as a response to this question noted that “all of the above” were preferred methods of communication. (Figure 1).

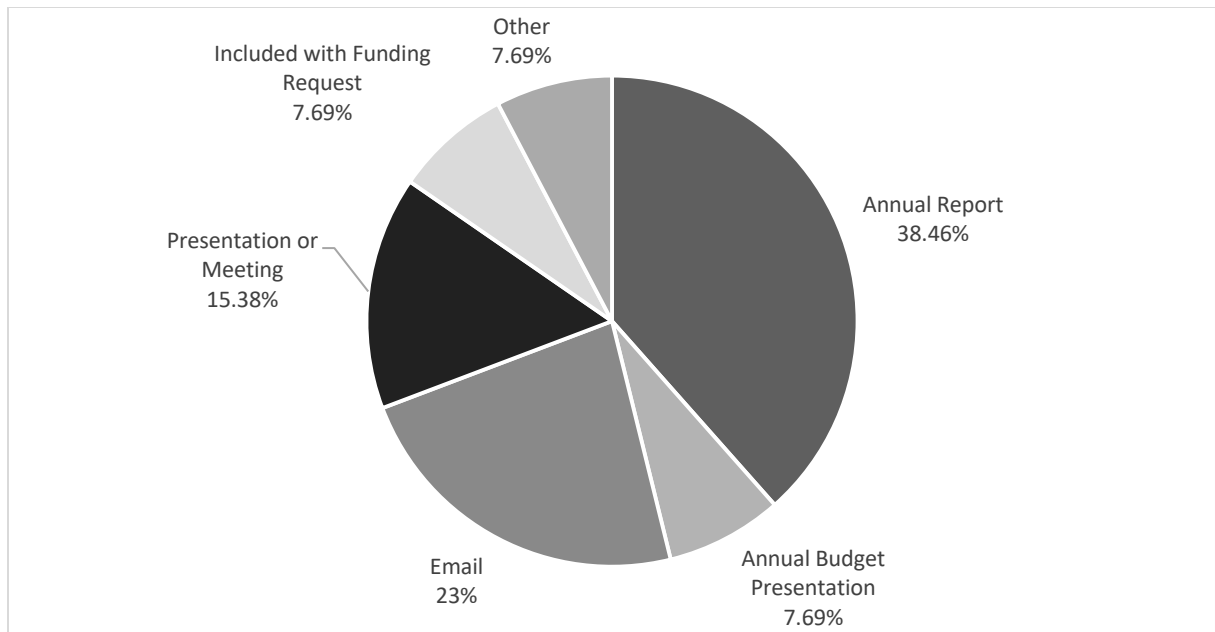


Figure 1. *Provosts' data communication preferences for funding requests.*

In the qualitative interview phase, provosts discussed few if any of the options discussed in the quantitative survey. The provosts that were interested were primarily concerned with usage data, campus collaboration, and out of the box thinking when asked about funding requests. The most common codes that appeared during analysis of the questions related to funding requests were Request Data Usage (RDU), Campus Collaboration (CC), Request Data Usage Negative (RDUN), Granular Usage Data (GUD), and Funding Request Data Provided (FRDP). It should be noted that no provost spoke to any preferred method for receiving funding, only the kinds of requests they considered impactful (Figure 2; Appendix G). One provost did note a preference for how the data was presented, though they did not discuss a preferred format for receiving the data, noting:

What is less important to me is a detailed summary. Not just the library, but all of my deans and department heads, they will send me data, some send me very

detailed tables and charts and quite honestly, I don't have time to look through all that. I want them to just summarize it down to the bottom line for me. All of this data is still important but simplify it for me. Don't make me dig in and have to figure out what its saying.

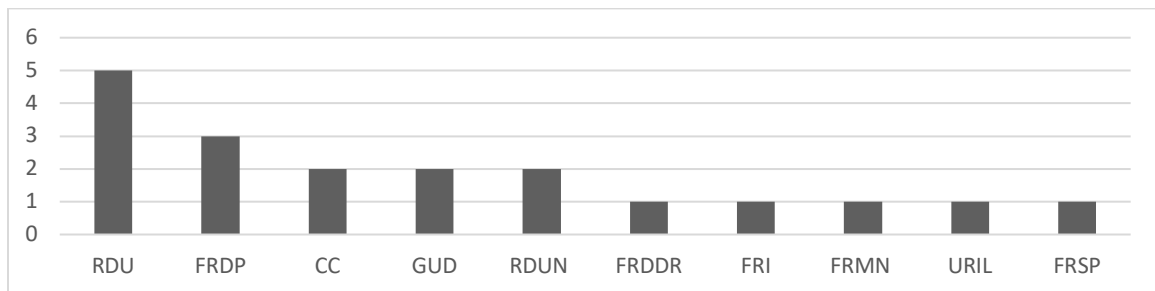


Figure 2. *Qualitative code counts for provosts' responses to questions about funding.*

Research Question 2: Provosts' Perceptions of Library Participation

The second research question was concerned with provosts' perceptions of the academic library's contribution to university initiatives, especially those concerned with retention and student success. The quantitative survey responses suggested that provosts seemed to perceive the library as more involved in campus initiatives than did library directors. However, responses tended to be more evenly spread across the "very involved" to "marginally involved" response spectrum. Provosts also saw libraries as most involved in student retention initiatives and accreditation efforts, but also rated the library as very involved to somewhat involved in academic success efforts and faculty research productivity. Participation in enrollment initiatives was perceived to be the area where libraries were least involved. However, a majority of responses indicated that the library was perceived to be at least marginally involved in efforts to increase enrollment. Among the provosts who did not perceive the library to be active in retention efforts, four felt that it was because the campus did not recognize the library's role in retention

initiatives, while one noted that though the library had not participated in the past, that this was changing on campus in recent years (Table 6).

Table 6. *Provost perceptions of library involvement in university initiatives.*

Response	Very Involved	Somewhat Involved	Marginally Involved	Not Involved
Undergraduate Retention Initiatives	35.71% (5)	28.57% (4)	21.43% (3)	14.29% (2)
Enrollment Initiatives	14.29% (2)	35.71% (5)	21.43% (3)	28.57% (4)
Student Academic Success	42.86% (6)	35.71% (5)	21.43% (3)	0% (0)
Faculty Research Productivity	42.86% (6)	42.86% (6)	14.29% (2)	0% (0)
Accreditation	50.00% (7)	21.43% (3)	21.43% (3)	7.14% (1)

Provosts were also asked to address the library’s perceived participation in high-impact practices. First-year seminars and writing intensive courses appear to be the areas in which provosts see libraries as being most involved. However, the majority of responses for every option show the library as being at least very or somewhat involved in high impact practices. Provosts were not as likely to perceive the library as being heavily involved in service or community learning, with nearly thirty-seven percent of respondents indicating the library was either only marginally involved or not involved at all in this practice. No other response reached a combined total of marginally involved or not involved of more than twenty-four percent of respondents (Table 7).

Table 7. *Provost responses to the question: How involved is your institution’s library with each of the following high-impact practices?*

Practice	Very Involved	Somewhat Involved	Marginally Involved	Not Involved
First year seminars	50.00% (6)	33.33% (4)	8.33% (1)	8.33% (1)
Writing-intensive courses	41.67% (5)	50.00% (6)	0.00% (0)	8.33% (1)
Undergraduate Research	30.77% (4)	46.15% (6)	23.08% (3)	0.00% (0)
Service or Community Learning	25.00% (3)	33.33% (4)	25.00% (3)	16.67% (2)
Capstone Projects	38.46% (5)	46.15% (6)	15.38% (2)	0.00% (0)

Provosts were also asked whether they felt their institution’s academic library had an impact on students’ decisions to continue enrollment. They primarily felt that the library did have an impact, though this was mostly through anecdotal evidence (46.15% of responses) and a mix of anecdotal and direct evidence (15.38%). Only one provost noted that this connection was evident through documented evidence, while four stated that the connection was either unclear or not present (30.72%).

In the qualitative interview phase, provosts did not discuss many of the options in the qualitative survey. The most frequently mentioned codes that tied in with the survey were Undergraduate Research/Information Literacy Assistance (URIL), First-Year Programs (FYP), and Campus Collaboration (CC) (Figure 3). When asked about programs that contributed to retention or student success, one provost discussed an initiative to build a learning commons (LC) as their example but stressed the importance

of the library in undergraduate research assistance in other questions. However, it should be noted that most provosts who discussed a library initiative focused on student success or retention said that there was documented evidence that provided proof of the initiative's success (Figure 3; Appendix G).



Figure 3. *Qualitative code counts for provosts' responses to questions about participation .*

Research Question 3: Deans' or Directors' Data Preferences for Funding

The research question addressed what data library deans or directors preferred for funding requests and the manner they would prefer to send it. The data that the most library deans and directors said they would “always include” with a funding request was a demonstrated connection with retention or student success (68.75%). Other popular options included user satisfaction data, faculty feedback, and endorsement by other deans (56.25% indicated “would always include”) (Table 8). Deans and directors seemed to approve of all ways of communicating data, with no option having more than three deans or directors who were “not likely to include” or “would never include” any of the options. Interestingly, two deans indicated they would never include a connection of the request to increased faculty research productivity, while one responded that they would never include data demonstrating correlation with increased retention or student success (Table 8).

Table 8. *Dean/Director responses for: How likely would you be to include or reference the following data types to help support the request?*

Data type	Would always include	Likely to include	Not likely to include	Would never include
Basic usage data	37.50% (6)	50.00% (8)	12.50% (2)	0.00% (0)
User satisfaction data	56.25% (9)	37.5% (6)	6.25% (1)	0.00% (0)
Faculty feedback	56.25% (9)	37.5% (6)	6.25% (1)	0.00% (0)
Dean endorsements	56.25% (9)	31.25% (5)	12.50% (2)	0.00% (0)
Correlation w/ retention	68.75% (11)	12.50% (2)	12.50% (2)	6.25% (1)
Correlation w/ faculty research	43.75% (7)	31.25% (5)	12.50% (2)	12.5% (2)
Focus group data	18.75% (3)	62.50% (10)	18.75% (3)	0.00% (0)
Anecdotal evidence	37.50% (6)	43.75% (7)	18.75% (3)	0.00% (0)

Library deans or directors were also asked what the most effective way was for communicating data connected with funding requests. Library dean and director responses showed a slight preference for a presentation or meeting (37.5%) while an annual budget presentation (25%) or annual report (18.75%) were close behind. Including the data as part of the funding request was not popular, with only 6.25% of deans or directors indicating a preference for this method of data communication. No deans or directors selected email as their preferred method of communicating data. The two deans or directors who selected “other” noted that they would use all of the above, plus an ongoing relationship with the provost or would use any, depending on the urgency of the request (Figure 4).

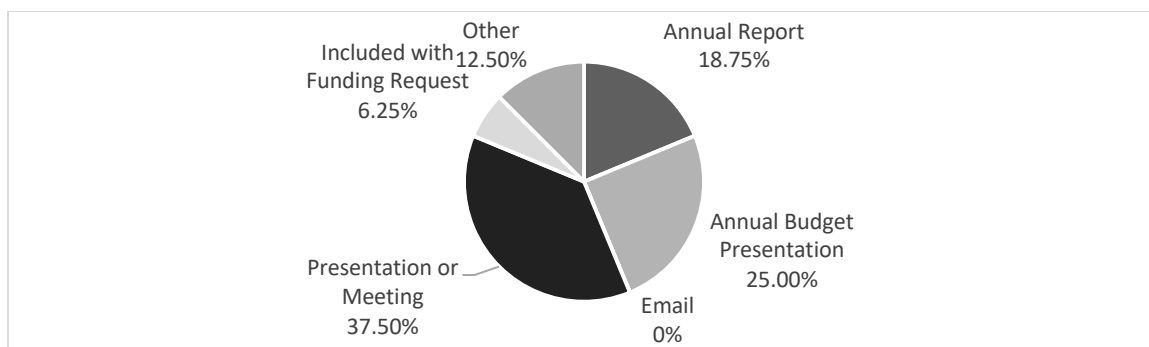


Figure 4. *Library dean/director perceptions of most effective methods for communicating data.*

In the qualitative interviews, library deans and directors, like provosts, did not mention most of the options from the quantitative survey. The most common codes for their qualitative responses included discussions of funding requests where direct data was provided (FRDP) and the need for more granular usage data (GUD) in funding requests, especially that which is tied to student success or retention. Other repeating codes found in qualitative interview questions about funding included a positive take on requesting funding for materials (FRMP) and the idea that the data provided for funding requests is dependent on the type of request being submitted. There were also four times when deans or directors spoke negatively about general usage data, like gate counts, in funding requests. Few deans or directors discussed funding requests for staff (FRST), space (FRSP), or technology (FRT) (Figure 5; Appendix G).

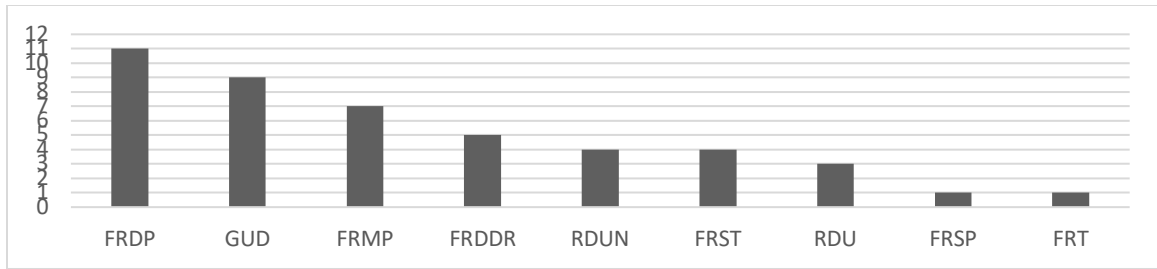


Figure 5. *Qualitative code counts for library deans' or directors' responses to questions about funding.*

Research Question 4: Deans' or Directors' Perceptions of Library Participation

In general, library deans or directors perceived the library as very or somewhat involved in most categories of campus initiatives. There was a particularly strong perception that the library was very or somewhat involved in accreditation, undergraduate retention initiatives, and faculty research productivity. There was indication that the library was perceived to be involved in student academic success initiatives, though less than the other categories. The one area that this group did not perceive much involvement in was in university-wide enrollment initiatives. It should be noted that one survey respondent in this group did not feel that the library was active in retention efforts on campus because they indicated that their campus did not recognize the library's role in contributing to retention (Table 9).

Table 9. *Library dean/director involvement in university initiatives.*

Response	Very Involved	Somewhat Involved	Marginally Involved	Not Involved
Undergraduate Retention Initiatives	12.50% (2)	81.25% (13)	6.25% (1)	0.00% (0)
Enrollment Initiatives	6.25% (1)	31.25% (5)	43.75% (7)	18.75% (3)
Student Academic Success	18.75% (3)	50.00% (8)	31.25% (5)	0.00% (0)
Faculty Research Productivity	25.00% (4)	68.75% (11)	6.25% (1)	0.00% (0)
Accreditation	87.50% (14)	12.50% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)

Library deans' and directors' responses indicated a high degree of participation in high impact practices. There was also some alignment with dean or director responses to this question and provosts' responses to the same item. The only practice that received a not involved response was service or community based learning, where only one library dean or director felt their library was not involved in the practice, which was similar to survey responses by university provosts. Library deans or directors noted their libraries were most involved in first-year seminars and capstone projects, though writing-intensive courses and participation in undergraduate research projects (Table 10).

Table 10. *Dean/director perceptions of library's involvement with high-impact practices*

Practice	Very Involved	Somewhat Involved	Marginally Involved	Not Involved
First year seminars	46.67 (7)	40% (6)	13.33% (2)	0.00% (0)
Writing-intensive courses	37.50% (6)	37.50% (6)	25.00% (4)	0.00% (0)
Undergraduate Research	40.00% (6)	53.33% (8)	6.67% (1)	0.00% (0)
Service or Community Learning	0.00% (0)	50.00% (8)	43.75 (7)	6.25% (1)
Capstone Projects	13.33% (2)	66.67% (10)	20.00% (3)	0.00% (0)

Library deans or directors appeared to suggest that there was no connection between the library and decisions to continue enrollment, though 25% felt the connection was unclear. However, their responses were like provosts' replies in that most felt this connection had primarily been established through anecdotal evidence (37.5%) or a mix of anecdotal and documented evidence (25%). Only two library deans or directors (12.5%) responded that this connection was primarily based on documented evidence.

The qualitative interview questions that addressed this question reinforced much of the sentiments of the quantitative survey responses. The most popular code throughout the interview questions focused on the library's role in student success focused on undergraduate research/information literacy efforts, which would include efforts to work on undergraduate research, writing intensive courses, and community learning (URIL). The projects mentioned under this code varied from basic library instruction efforts to a director at a state college's efforts to provide information literacy instruction to dual-enrollment students. Other common codes included discussions of engagement with

students (EWS) and campus collaborations (CC) with other departments. Four deans or directors noted that they used direct data (IPD) to prove the success of these programs, while three relied on anecdotal data (IPA) to make their case. Only one dean or director made remarks that suggested the library was not currently participating in these efforts (IPNP) (Figure 6; Appendix G).

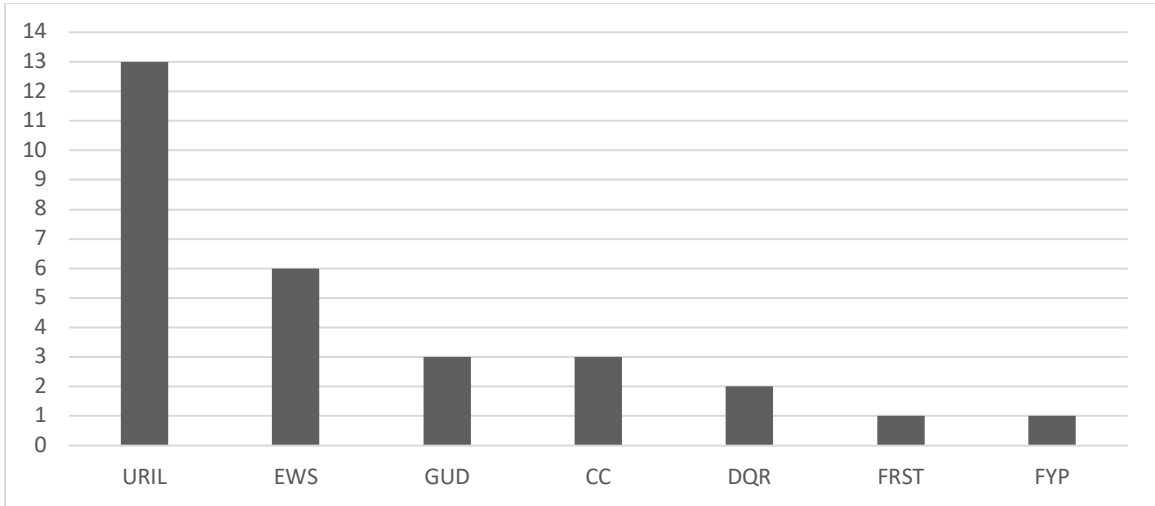


Figure 6. *Library dean/director qualitative code counts for library involvement in campus initiatives for retention or success.*

Research Question 5: Relationship Between Responses and Institutional Designation

The final research question sought to understand whether there was a relationship between the attitudes and actions of provosts and library deans or directors concerning recruitment and retention initiatives and funding requests associated with institutional designation. While there was no direct quantitative survey question that addressed this question, breaking down the data by the institutional designation demographic question can help answer this question. Among provosts, there did appear to be some slight difference in the institutional designation, with Research Universities indicating the least involvement in retention and success initiatives. Provosts at State Universities reported

the most involvement in these initiatives, though the number of provosts selecting “somewhat involved” to “very involved” was like provosts from Comprehensive Universities and State Colleges (Figure 7 & Figure 8).

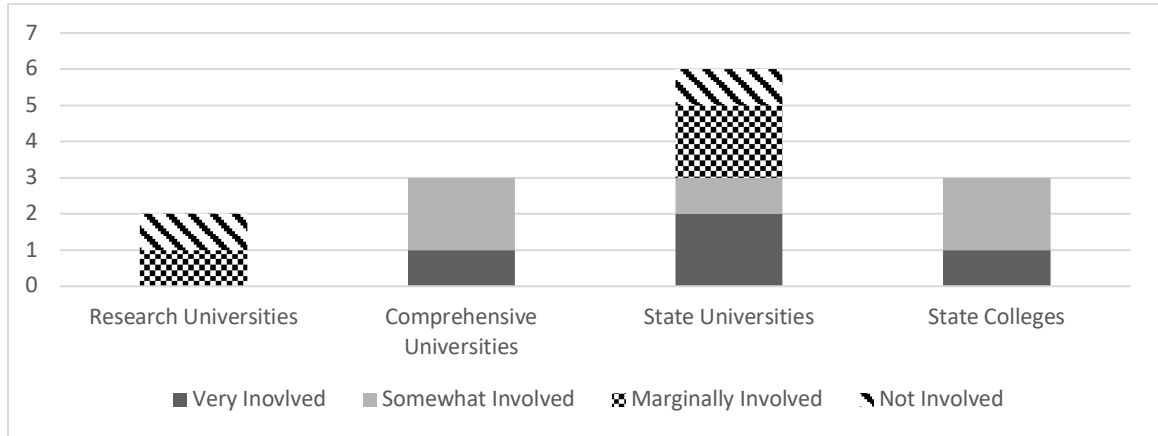


Figure 7. *Provosts’ perception of library involvement in undergraduate retention initiatives by institutional designation.*

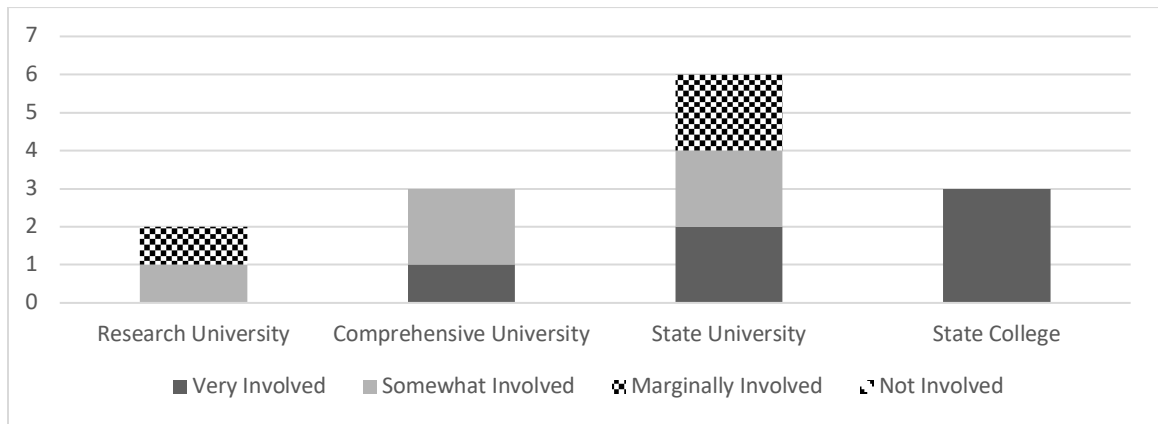


Figure 8. *Provosts’ perception of library involvement in student success initiatives by institutional designation.*

Unlike provosts, library deans or directors generally perceived the library to be more involved in undergraduate retention and student success initiatives. No library deans or directors indicated that their library was “not involved” in either of these practices. Otherwise, the level of perceived participation across institutional designations

was similar to that of provosts, with Research Universities perceiving the least involvement. However, State College deans and directors indicated more of a level of involvement in these initiatives than provosts at similar institutions. Overall, both groups of respondents appear to suggest that there is some difference in the perceived involvement of the academic library in student success and retention initiatives across institutional designations in the USG (Figure 9 & Figure 10).

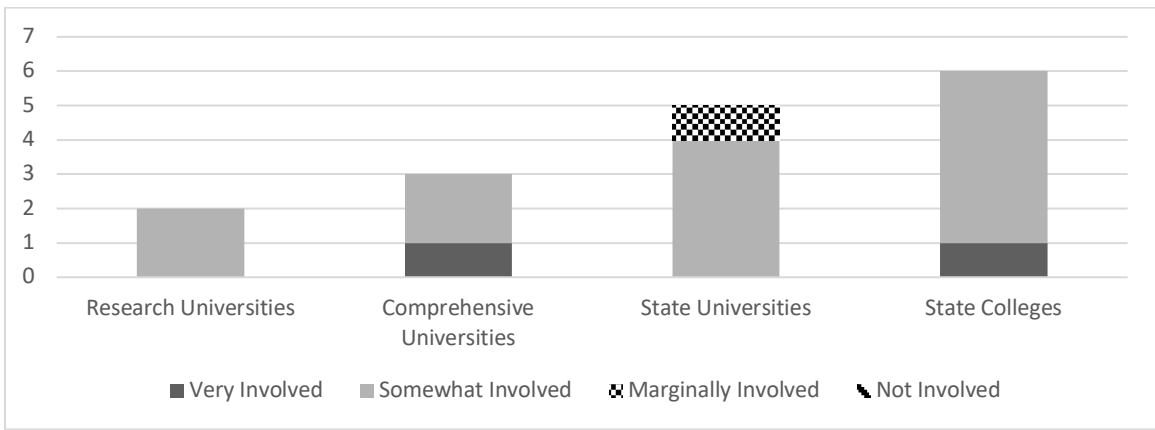


Figure 9. *Library dean/director's perception of library involvement in undergraduate retention initiatives by institutional designation.*

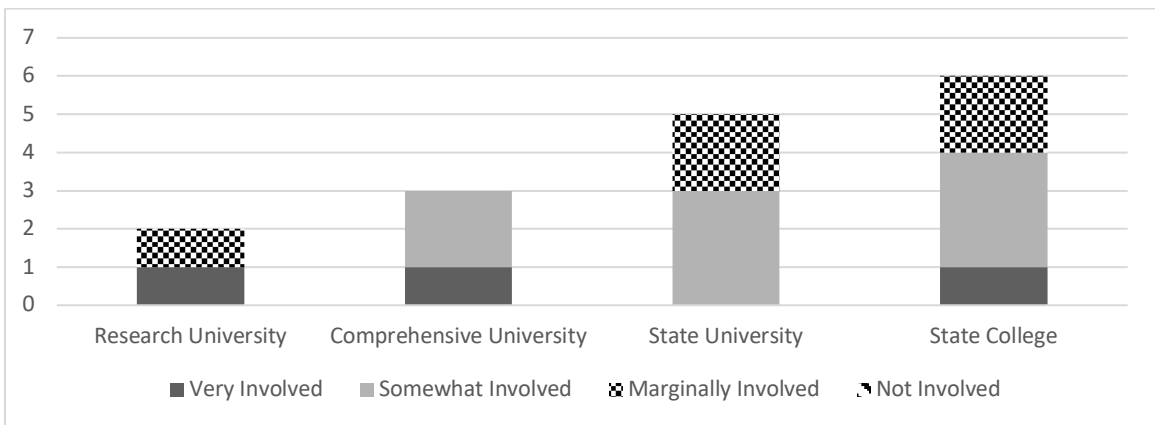


Figure 10. *Library dean/directors' perception of library involvement in student success initiatives by institutional designation.*

This sentiment was not borne out in the qualitative interview responses. There was only one question in both sets of interviews that addressed this, so the counts for codes were a binary one or zero for both provosts and deans or directors (Appendix G). The provosts who participated in this phase of the interview all provided responses that indicated they did not feel the institutional delegation played a role in the library's role in promoting retention or student success. As one provost from a comprehensive university noted, "I think it's [retention participation] largely the same across institutions because while the reasons they leave us are different, the ways we keep them are not really different." Though provosts did not necessarily think the designation played a role in efforts to retain students, all provosts who were interviewed did acknowledge that there might be some difference according to the institutions' mission. A provost from a state university captured this sentiment by noting that although institutions and their libraries might have different missions across the different designations, "the mission should not drive whether or not the library is part of student success at a university in my opinion. The library should be a part of student success."

Library deans or directors shared this sentiment with provosts. Nearly all the deans or directors interviewed stated that the designation of the institution had no effect on the library's participation in recruitment or retention efforts. The interviews mirrored provosts' comments by including differences in mission, but not necessarily focus. A dean of a comprehensive university noted that while their institution was participating in efforts to retain students, "that's not really associated with our formal classification, whether it be the formal classification that Board of Regents has assigned to us or our Carnegie Classification or anything like that." However, a library dean from a state

college that participated in the interviews argued that the institutional designation did play a role in how they participated in retention efforts. When they were asked whether their institution's designation had an impact on how they were expected to participate in retention efforts, they stated:

I hope so. That's my number one job over the next couple of years. So, one of the things that actually attracted me to this school is that it's an access institution in the USG. Which means scores are lower to accept students than in other schools, really anywhere. So, we have a social justice mission to play and we need to be an equalizing force in these students lives.

Summary

This chapter has presented the findings of the research study as they pertain to each of the research questions that guided it. The results were presented in line with the methods outlined in the previous chapter. Both qualitative and quantitative data sets were analyzed and presented in this initial analysis. Emphasis was on basic descriptive statistical analysis for the quantitative survey responses and the identification of trends in the qualitative data. The findings covered in this chapter, their implications for practice, and recommendations for practice will be discussed in depth in the next chapter.

Chapter V
CONCLUSION
Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine the professional relationship between library deans or directors and university provosts regarding funding requests and the perception of the library's involvement with university-wide initiatives for retention and student success. Given the changing landscape of higher education in recent years that has been defined by declining budgets (Woodward, 2014) and an increased emphasis on retention and student success metrics (Hubbard & Loos, 2013), it is imperative for libraries to understand how they contribute to institutional efforts to enable them to engage in more effective advocacy during an era of shrinking budgets.

Though several studies (Lynch, et al., 2007; Murray & Ireland, 2018; Robertson, 2015) have sought to determine provosts' perceptions regarding these issues, this study wanted to build on the research of Murray and Ireland (2018) by including data about library deans or directors in addition to provosts. This was done to determine where differences could be found and what the implications of those differences would be for the professional practice of both groups. As noted by Lynch, et al. (2007), academic libraries can no longer rely on their traditional place as the academic heart of their institutions and must begin to better demonstrate their contribution to stakeholders (Oakleaf, 2010). As provosts are typically the university administrators who supervise library deans or directors (Robertson, 2015), this study focused on the interaction

between provosts and library deans or directors, rather than other university administrators including university presidents.

The study also focused on the institutions within the University System of Georgia (USG) so that it might better understand what differences between provosts and library deans or directors there were that were not a function of differing university governance structures or public and private funding models. Though this decision resulted in a relatively small sample size that could not be used for inferential statistics, it did provide a cross section of several types of higher education institutions from major research universities down to four-year state colleges that are connected under a common system of governance and a single state government.

The study sought to answer five primary research questions that address the communication preferences of provosts and library deans or directors regarding funding requests and their perceptions of the library's involvement in campus-wide initiatives for retention and student success. The research questions contain mirroring components for deans or directors and provosts and were created so that responses from groups could be easily compared to each other. One additional question was added to determine what, if any effect, the USG institutional designation might have on perceptions about the library's role in campus-wide initiatives. The five research questions that guided this study were:

1. What kinds of data do provosts find most effective when considering library funding requests and how do they want to receive this data?

2. What role do provosts see the academic library playing in campus-wide retention and student success initiatives and is this perception based on anecdotal or documented evidence, or a mixture of both?
3. What kinds of data are academic library deans or directors including with funding requests made to the provost's office and how are they providing it?
4. What role do academic library deans or directors see the library playing in campus-wide retention and student success initiatives and is this perception based on anecdotal or documented evidence, or a mixture of both?
5. Is there a relationship between the attitudes and actions of provosts and library deans or directors concerning retention and student success initiatives or funding requests and institutional designation?

In addition to the research questions, this study also included some research assumptions about the research questions. These assumptions were primarily based on findings from a study that examined provost attitudes about academic libraries (Murray & Ireland, 2018). They are mapped to the research questions. However, there is no assumption for the fifth research question, because none of the similar studies examined in the literature review discussed this concept in a way that was transferable to the USG institutional designation system. The four research assumptions of this study were as follows:

1. Provosts will most prefer demonstrated correlation of any funding request with increased retention or success metrics and will most prefer to receive this data in the format of an annual budget presentation.
2. Provosts will primarily see the library as somewhat involved in retention and success initiatives and this attitude will be based predominantly on anecdotal data.
3. Academic library deans or directors will include usage data more than any other kind in making funding requests and will provide this data most through annual reports.
4. Academic library deans or directors will primarily see the library as somewhat involved in retention and success initiatives and this attitude will be based predominantly on anecdotal data.

Summary of Findings

Research Question 1: Provosts' Data Preferences for Funding Requests

The first research question of the study asked what data provosts found most effective when considering library funding requests and how they preferred to receive that data. The quantitative survey results indicated that most categories of data were at least moderately influential for a provost's decision-making process, but the most influential data came from dean endorsements, correlation with retention, correlation with faculty research productivity, and faculty feedback. The least effective forms of data were focus group data and anecdotal evidence.

The qualitative data from provosts' interviews did not appear to perfectly correspond to the quantitative data. The interviews revealed provosts who were most interested in library usage data, though there was some level of disagreement about how

this usage data should be presented. One provost was adamant that basic usage data that was not granular was not useful, while others spoke to the critical need for basic usage data from the library. No provost that was interviewed spoke about the effectiveness of dean endorsements or correlation with faculty research when they answered questions about particularly well composed library funding requests or what they would want from an ideal funding request. Though they often mentioned that data correlating the request with retention would be effective, provosts were quick to mention that such a correlation is difficult to establish.

Provosts indicated that an annual report was by far the most effective way of communicating data for library funding requests in the quantitative data. Though no other responses were close to this preference, it was clear that emails or annual budget meetings were the least popular means of communicating data to provosts. This was neither supported nor rejected by the qualitative data, as provosts did not talk about their preferred means of communication much in the interviews. However, most of the projects they discussed when answering questions about particularly effective library requests indicated funding requests that came in as end of year or small capital funding requests that were supported by direct data. None of the provosts spoke about the means in which this data was communicated, simply that data was communicated to them.

The overall results of the study indicated mixed results for the first research assumption, which suggested provosts would be likely to prefer demonstrated correlation of any funding request with increased retention or success metrics and will most prefer to receive this data in the format of an annual budget presentation. Though the quantitative data supports the idea that a demonstrated connection to retention and success metrics is

highly influential, the qualitative data suggests that provosts think this connection is difficult to make effectively and that they still prefer basic usage data, though to varying degrees. The quantitative data did not support the idea that provosts preferred to receive data in the form of an annual budget presentation, ranking it among the lowest of their preferences for receiving data. The qualitative data neither supported nor rejected this assumption since no provosts discussed their preferences for receiving data in the extended interviews.

These results appeared to be somewhat different than what had previously been found in the literature, though there were also areas of similarity. In Murray and Ireland's (2018) study, provosts were found to prefer to receive their data in the format of a "presentation or meeting" rather than an "annual report". This contrasts with the study's results, which suggested that provosts in the USG preferred the annual report for data over other formats. The type of data that provosts suggested they wanted in both the qualitative and the quantitative data from this study was basic usage data, which aligns with Robertson's (2015) findings, but differed from Murray and Ireland (2018), which found that provosts considered data connected to retention and student success to be the most influential.

One reason for the difference could be that provosts in this study felt that direct connections between student retention and the library were difficult to make. This was especially true in the qualitative data where most provosts said this directly. However, provosts in the qualitative data were much more positive about the libraries role in student success, indicating that they may still agree with the provosts in Murray and

Ireland (2018) who responded that data connected to student success would be highly influential on funding decisions.

The importance of data and its use in accountability through funding is an important hallmark of the concept of New Public Management (NPM) (Gadkari, 2009). Therefore, examining the results through the lens of NPM is important for better understanding steps to improve communication between provosts and library deans and directors. In a study on the implementation of NPM programs between managers and subordinates Hansen (2011) found that implementing NPM programs in highly specialized departments with established professional standards can be difficult, but that it can be more successful when the programs are in line with previous professional practice. Libraries can be considered a highly specialized department with long established professional standards. If provosts are to have more success implementing their NPM-esque programs of data-driven accountability, studies like Hansen (2011) suggests they may have further success in working with the already established professional standards of library data collection.

Rather than focus on the “vertical ‘command and control’ forms typical of the NPM paradigm” (Plotnikof, 2016, p. 109), the results of this research question suggest a different, yet still related paradigm. Plotnikof (2016, p. 109) discusses the concept of “New Public Governance” (NPG) that is described as “a post-NPM ‘governance’ paradigm which places far more emphasis on partnership, networking and lateral modes of organizing.” This is confirmed in the study’s qualitative data where provosts frequently discussed the concept of partnerships with their deans or directors and did not express the sentiments of “command and control” that Plotnikof argues are typical of

NPM (2016, p. 109). Plotnikof's (2016, 125) study found that "negotiating the organizational design of collaboration from a discourse perspective is worthwhile to advance." The findings in this study, especially in the qualitative section revealed provosts are looking to advance exactly this discourse.

Research Question 2: Provosts' Perceptions of Library Participation

The second research question asked what role provosts felt the academic library played in campus-wide retention and student success initiatives and whether this perception was based on anecdotal evidence, documented evidence, or a mixture of both. Responses to the quantitative survey indicated that provosts overwhelmingly felt that the library was at least somewhat involved in campus-wide initiatives to improve retention and student success and noted that the high-impact practices the library was most involved were first-year seminars, writing intensive courses, and capstone projects. Very few provosts indicated that the library was not involved in any campus initiatives. The area that libraries were perceived to be least involved in was enrollment initiatives, which are important for universities, but are not the same as retention or student success initiatives.

The qualitative data appears to support the quantitative findings. When provosts spoke about the library's contributions to retention or student success, they were unanimous in saying that the library did have a role to play. When they discussed specifics of how the library was involved, they most often referred to information literacy instruction, which is a common way that libraries support writing intensive courses and capstone projects. They also frequently discussed library involvement in first-year seminars or programs. The main connection of the library to retention that the

interviewees mentioned was engaging students. While provosts were very likely to discuss documented evidence supporting the libraries involvement in high-impact practices, they did not discuss such evidence when talking about the importance of the library in engaging students.

Both sets of data collected provide a mixed picture for both parts of the second research assumption that speculated provosts would primarily see the library as somewhat involved in retention and success initiatives and that this attitude would be based primarily on anecdotal data. The quantitative data suggested that provosts saw the library as somewhat to very involved in these initiatives, while the qualitative data suggests a very high level of involvement, particularly in high-impact practices for retention and student success. The quantitative data shows that provosts overwhelmingly agreed that the library's contribution to students' decision to continue enrollment was primarily based on anecdotal evidence or was not clear or not present at all. However, this conclusion became somewhat less clear in the qualitative interviews where provosts pointed to a number of areas where the library was participating in high-impact practices with documented evidence, though they did acknowledge that a direct correlation to retention was somewhat harder to prove.

The findings in this research question agree with the findings in previous studies of provosts' perceptions of academic library participation in campus-wide initiatives. Since Lynch et al. (2007), there have been numerous documented studies of provosts' understanding of how the library contributes to the mission of the university including Robertson (2015) and Murray and Ireland (2018). However, there were slight differences in how provosts saw the library's contributions in the study and the literature. Provosts in

Robertson (2015) frequently discussed the library's role in providing access to the materials, while the qualitative data from this study found provosts focusing on the library's importance in providing information literacy instruction to students at all levels. The results related to this research question were more aligned with Murray and Ireland (2018), who found that provosts' did not see the library as involved in enrollment efforts, but did see the library playing an important role in student success. There was a slight difference with the Murray and Ireland (2018) results in that provosts responding to their study indicated less of a connection between libraries and retention than this study's qualitative results indicated. However, the qualitative data provided statements from provosts that the library's connection to retention was not well established and would be difficult to quantify.

Though it discusses another area of quantifying accountability in higher education Frølich's (2005) study of Norwegian universities' point systems for publication provides a comparable example of how NPM ideals can be successful in the world of higher education. Frølich (2005) found that where values were shared and not in contrast to the goals of management, NPM ideals were likely to be more successful. This is important to the findings of this research question, because the extent to which provosts and library deans or directors share similar perceptions of the role the library plays in university-wide initiatives could be predictive of how successful the NPM-esque values of accountability and measurement will be at a particular institution or group of institutions. Looking to the results of research question four will help provide understanding of where differences between these groups might be, so that better understanding can be reached for more effective implementation of any university measures that resemble NPM.

Research Question 3: Deans' or Directors' Data Preferences for Funding

The third research question asked library deans or directors what kinds of data they were including with funding requests they make to the provost's office and asked what ways they were providing the data. The quantitative survey data showed that library deans and directors were likely to include nearly every category of data that was listed as an option in the survey. The most popular option for data deans and directors "would always include" was data that showed a correlation with retention, while endorsements from other deans, faculty, and user satisfaction data were tied for the second most popular option. Focus groups were not a popular choice for "would always include" but was the most popular choice for "likely to include". There was little that deans and directors would never include with a funding request according to the survey data. The only options that were selected for "would never include" by deans or directors were correlations with faculty research and retention.

The qualitative data did not mirror the survey data. Among deans and directors who were interviewed, there was much more of a focus on what the funding request was going towards than the methods used to obtain the successful request. Most interviewees spoke about requests for additional materials funding. This is particularly interesting when compared with the provost interviews, where some respondents were critical of special funding requests for library materials. When they did speak about data they used for these requests, they spoke about usage statistics and accreditation standards rather than any other item listed. Like provosts, the deans and directors often said that they would like to provide more data that tied the library to retention or student success, but that it was currently difficult to show that connection.

The ways in which library deans and directors wanted to send out data relating to their funding requests is particularly interesting compared to the formats that provosts said they wanted to receive their data. Library deans or directors chose a presentation, meeting, or annual budget presentation as their top preferred choices for communicating data connected with funding requests. This is of interest because these options were among the least popular options for provosts. The two top choices for provosts to receive data connected to funding requests was through annual reports or email, which were the third most popular and least popular options respectively.

The qualitative data concerning this research question did not contradict the quantitative data. Though deans and directors did note that there was always data present when they were presenting funding requests, they did not often discuss how they communicated that data. When this group of interviewees did mention how they shared data it was usually in the form of a budget meeting or an end of year funding request. As the latter was not an option in the quantitative survey, it is impossible to say whether it would have been a popular option if included there. However, the talk of budget meetings did seem to line up with deans' or directors' preferences as indicated in the quantitative data. It is also important to note that most participants in the extended interviews stressed that the data they would choose to include in a funding request would depend on what the request was.

The data did not support the research assumption that deans or directors would primarily provide usage data in funding requests and would provide that data most through annual reports. It was clear that budget meetings were the preferred method of this group and that they indicated that data correlating the request with retention rates

would be what they would be most likely to include in their requests. However, the qualitative data did suggest that the library deans or directors who participated in the interview phase of the project did note that usage data was sometimes used, though that was offset by those who spoke negatively of basic usage data in funding requests.

There was not much related directly to deans or directors in the literature, but it is important to compare their results with past studies of provosts' responses to see where any differences occur. As with previous research questions, there were some small differences with previous studies. Library deans or directors tended to not be as supportive of basic usage data, especially in the qualitative interview process, where several deans and directors spoke to their desire to use granular usage data and to avoid using this kind of data where it was not relevant to a request. This differs from the provosts' responses in Robertson (2015), but was more in line with the findings in Murray and Ireland (2018). The alignment with Murray and Ireland (2018) especially comes through in the qualitative data, where deans and directors both agreed that data that connected the library with retention or success would be what they would prefer to present. However, it is also important to note, that they shared the perspective from the provosts' qualitative interviews that this data is often difficult to quantify.

As noted in the summaries of previous research questions, Frølich (2005) noted that NPM measures are more successful where values are shared. The results of this study indicated that there was some alignment between provosts and library deans or directors. They especially shared perspectives on the difficulty of directly quantifying the connection between academic libraries and student retention. These results could be indicative that perhaps the pressure for accountability with student retention within the

USG that was similar to that felt by the faculty points system in Frølich (2005) might not be as strong on the academic library, especially since the two parties appear to be in agreement about the perceived degree of connection.

Research Question 4: Deans' or Directors' Perceptions of Library Participation

The fourth research question asked what role academic library deans or directors saw the library playing in campus-wide retention and student success initiatives and whether that perception was based on anecdotal evidence, documented evidence, or a mixture of both. The quantitative survey data suggested that librarians were not as willing as provosts to describe their libraries as “very involved” in campus-wide initiatives, though they a majority in every category except one noted they were either “somewhat” or “very involved” in these initiatives. Library deans and directors noted that they were most involved in accreditation initiatives on their campuses, while the next most popular initiatives were for undergraduate retention and faculty research productivity. The only area that any library dean or director indicated no involvement in was for enrollment initiatives, which corresponds with provosts’ responses as well.

The qualitative data indicated that there was more involvement with student success than the quantitative survey data suggested. By a wide margin, library deans and directors discussed the impact of their efforts in undergraduate research and information literacy on student success more than anything else when discussing the library’s contribution to student success. The second most popular topic dealt with engagement with students, which is also considered an important component of retaining students (Tinto, 1993). These sentiments were also shared by provosts who participated in extended interviews. The overwhelming presence of both topics in the qualitative data

suggests that academic libraries are perhaps more involved in campus-wide retention and success initiatives than their deans and directors indicated in the quantitative survey responses.

This disparity may come from a perceived lack of documented evidence of this connection among library deans and directors. In the quantitative surveys, nearly a quarter of respondents indicated the connection was “unclear,” while most felt the connection was only “based on anecdotal evidence.” Very few library deans or directors indicated that there was documented evidence of the connection present at their institution. Though this was primarily the case in the qualitative data as well, there was some discussion of documented evidence of the library’s contribution to student success in the extended interviews. However, it should be noted that the presence of some deans or directors who cited documented evidence in the qualitative data is offset by those who discussed using anecdotal data, difficulties with quantifying the libraries relationship with retention, and one interviewee who said their library was simply not participating in any institution-wide programs.

Interestingly, the responses to this research question mirrored the responses of provosts in Murray and Ireland (2018) relatively closely, which was not the case for the responses from the provosts in the USG. Library deans or directors in this study were more likely to see the connection between enrollment and retention as “unclear” or “based on anecdotal evidence”, which is close to the responses of provosts in Murray and Ireland (2018). They also shared some common responses with the provosts from Robertson’s (2015) study of provosts. The most notable connections to this study were found in the qualitative data, where deans or directors spoke about the need of the library

to provide access to materials and in their discussions of library as place. These responses were nearly identical to the provosts from Robertson's (2015) who shared the same perceptions about the role of the academic library on campus.

As noted in the summary of research question 2, Frølich (2005) found that NPM measures were better received in institutions where there was common ground between administrators and those they supervised. The results in this question revealed some important differences between the perceptions of provosts and library deans or directors. The primary differences arose in the area of perceived participation in university initiatives for retention and success, where provosts perceived more library involvement and saw that involvement as being more well documented than library deans or directors. This should be an easy difference to rectify, but it does speak to a need for some better form of communication between provosts and library deans or directors. If these differences are to be resolved to further improve the outcomes of these initiatives that have their roots in NPM concepts, then it is best for deans and directors to figure out how to best close the gap with any perceived differences.

Plotnikof (2016) noted the importance of collaboration, discussion, and partnership as hallmarks of the concept of NPG. Based on the qualitative data, it is clear that library directors want to forge these important partnerships with the provosts they serve. Several noted that when such partnerships were present, it made reaching both the library's and the university's goals much easier. One dean exemplified this sentiment when they stated:

That's why I use the word partners and collaborators. To show that you are just as invested in everything that is going on in the campus as everybody else is and you

have a role to play. You're not just sitting there as a passive organization waiting for people to use you.

Research Question 5: Relationship Between Responses and Institutional Designation

The fifth and final research question sought to answer what if any effect an institution's designation within the USG had on perceptions about the library's participation in campus-wide initiatives for retention or student success. The quantitative data from the surveys did not have a direct question about this, but breaking responses down by institutional designation does indicate a slight difference in the level of perceived participation in these initiatives between institutional designations. Across both dean or director and provost surveys, respondents from Research Universities indicated the least participation in retention and success initiatives. Though there are fewer respondents and fewer institutions in this category than in others, those who did respond were more likely to perceive the library as "not involved" or "marginally involved" than other designations.

Even this slight difference in perceptions was not borne out in the qualitative data. Nearly every single provost and library dean or director indicated that the institutional designation had little to do with perceptions of their library's role in campus-wide student success and retention initiatives. There was one library dean from a state college who spoke of a difference based on what they perceived as the equalizing mission of the access institution, but others felt that what retains students is the same across institutions. This is not to say that there were no differences found. Both provosts and library deans and directors noted that although there was no fundamental difference in how students were retained, there might be some institutional differences, based on their missions, in

how it gets accomplished. Wherever any difference in approaches to retention or student success were mentioned by either group, they always included a discussion about the mission of the institution.

It is difficult to directly connect this particular research question to previous studies in the literature. Murray and Ireland (2018) were the only study from the literature review to directly focus on differences between types of university. However, their study focused on the differences between Carnegie classifications, and not the institutional designations of one state's university system. Because Carnegie classifications do not map directly with the USG designations, it is not possible to say if there was any agreement between Murray and Ireland (2018) and this study.

Implications for Practice

Though the primary purpose of the study was to gather baseline data about provosts' and library deans' and directors' communication preferences for funding requests and their perceptions regarding the library's participation in retention and student success initiatives, the results still provide several important implications for practice. In addition, the results provide some possible recommendations for improving both communications between deans or directors and provosts and for improving perceptions of the library's participation in retention and success initiatives.

Importance of Assessment and Data

One major implication from the study is that data and assessment are key components of a successful relationship between deans and provosts. Though they might have had slightly differing opinions on the exact kinds of data they wanted to see from libraries, all the provosts in the extended interviews stressed the importance of data in

understanding how the library was contributing to the mission of the university in a time of budget cuts. Library deans and directors also frequently discussed the need for good data that showed these relationships. Important differences in their data preferences included provosts being more accepting of general usage statistics than library deans or directors and provosts' perception that the library is providing more documented evidence of their impact on students' decisions to remain enrolled than was noted by library deans or directors. These areas of difference provide important areas to begin discussion on how best to present assessment data in a way that is understandable to all.

Applicability of New Public Management and New Public Governance

The focus on data and measurement, especially within the context of declining public budgets for higher education, is reminiscent of the public administration concept of New Public Management (NPM). As noted in the literature review, the hallmarks of NPM include, "increased productivity, market competition, service orientation, decentralization, separating policy making from implementation, and accountability." (Gadkari, 2009, 66). Meier (2016) noted the presence of some of these hallmarks in the current world of higher education, especially noting the presence of a pressure for increased productivity and accountability through data collection. The results of this study imply that the current state of higher education is very reminiscent of NPM and that there are lessons to be learned for provosts and academic librarians from literature pertaining to colleges and universities where the connection between higher education and NPM has been studied.

Two relevant studies that explore universities that have implemented NPM policies are Frølich (2005) and Wright (2014). These studies directly address how NPM

policies were instituted and communicated on university campuses. Frølich (2005) found significant clashes between the concepts of NPM and the ideals of the university, though noted one way forward might be through communicating NPM through the lens of egalitarianism. Wright (2014) also noted significant issues with NPM and the university, noting that the drive for performance-driven funding at the schools she studied had mixed results, that often resulted in confusion for faculty more than any other outcome. The lesson for provosts and library leaders operating in these environments that resemble the hallmarks of NPM is clear. They must understand that the ideals of NPM often clash with those of higher education and if there is to be a way forward, it must include communication and transparency to prevent confusion about desired outcomes.

Another study suggests that a way forward might be to look beyond NPM to the next stage in its evolution. Plotnikof's (2016) study of NPG and management might provide a framework that is more in line with the traditional outlook of higher education. Within NPG, there is less of a focus on top down control to achieve goals and more on partnership and networking (Plotnikof, 2016). Since a number of qualitative interview subjects in this study spoke about concepts of partnership and collaboration in working between the two groups, using NPG rather than NPM could be a useful framework for practice.

Information Literacy is Increasingly Important

Another implication of the study is that provosts are very interested in the potential that information literacy instruction has for student success at their institutions. The qualitative interview data showed that provosts talked about the importance of information literacy more than any other topic related to questions about student success

or retention. The deans and directors who were interviewed certainly mentioned the importance of information literacy to student success and retention but not at the overwhelming level of the provost responses. Though the study did not address this directly, provosts' preference for information literacy's presence in the curriculum could have major implications for how much librarians teach, their faculty status, and even the level of staffing that is needed to provide such instruction to all university students.

Recommendations for Practice

In addition to the implications, there are also several recommendations for practice that come out of the results of the study. The following recommendations include suggestions for both provosts and library deans or directors. However, it should be noted that there is room for compromise in these recommendations for both groups. The key to applying these recommendations is figuring out what will work best in a given situation.

Keep Data In Annual Reports

The first recommendation is that library deans and directors should likely focus their data presentation efforts for their provosts on the library's annual report. This was the preferred method of receiving data in the quantitative survey, and though it was not discussed directly as a "preferred" format to receive data, provosts in the qualitative interviews did discuss data found in annual reports when talking about effective library funding requests. In addition, library deans or directors should take care to highlight the important conclusions of the data they are providing and how it supports their request. Provosts frequently mentioned clear and concise data in discussing effective funding requests during the qualitative interviews, with one provost noting the importance of

providing clear summaries with data, since provosts' schedules were often too busy to allow for proper analysis of large data sets without them.

Tie Data to University's Strategic Priorities

The key to presenting this data also appears to be the ability to connect it to the university's strategic priorities. Deans or directors should be mindful to tie their data into the university's strategic priorities, as that seems to be key to successful funding requests. Most of the provosts interviewed directly spoke of the importance of connecting library initiatives to the institution's strategic priorities, with one provost arguing that their dean's ability to do this was the number one characteristic that made them successful in that position. It is also important to note that this is a key feature highlighted in the literature on NPM as well (Frølich, 2005; Plotnikof, 2016; Wright, 2014)

Remain Mindful of What is Being Requested

The final recommendation for deans or directors is to be mindful of how requests for materials funding are presented to provosts. In the qualitative interviews, deans or directors frequently mentioned materials requests when discussing funding, but provosts did not discuss a single materials request when talking about successful or well composed funding requests from the libraries. One provost went so far as to express concern about libraries that only requested materials year after year, preferring that they instead find creative and strategically focused projects for funding requests, while working with materials requests in the background. Library deans or directors need not abandon these requests entirely, but they should take care that materials funding is not their number one perennial special funding request to their provost.

Understand Why Specific Data is Needed for Specific Requests

A recommendation for both provosts and library deans or directors is that they understand that no two requests are the same and that the type of data that would be most beneficial for a request varies greatly with the type of request being submitted. Though both groups expressed support for this sentiment in both the quantitative and qualitative data, this recommendation goes beyond just understanding that the data will vary. Provosts and library deans or directors should be communicating with each other about why a dataset was chosen. Though this study does not recommend that provosts need to become experts on library affairs, they can endeavor to understand past library funding requests and ask for clarification for any data they do not understand. Conversely, library deans or directors should ensure that the data they provide is relevant and that they have explanations for why it is relevant prior to including it in a funding request.

Help the Library Define its Connection to Retention and Success

A recommendation for provosts is to help the library better define its connection with retention and student success. According to both the quantitative and qualitative data, provosts from this study are clear that the library is involved with retention and student success, but there was a lot of discussion from both provosts and deans or directors about the difficulty of connecting the library to student retention. Because there is an emerging body of literature that is starting to support this connection in a documented way (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016; Hubbard & Loos, 2013; Pagowski & Hammond, 2012), provosts should consider providing more support to librarians trying to connect their work to student retention, especially where that work mirrors the university's strategic priorities.

One way forward for this is likely trying to define the connection between information literacy instruction, student success, and retention. Provosts and library deans or directors were united in stressing the role of information literacy as one of the most important things an academic library can do on the college campus. Studies have already been conducted on the connection of library instruction and increased student retention (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016; Hubbard & Loos, 2013; Pagowski & Hammond, 2012) and graduation rates (Fleschner, Holm, & Cook, 2019). This study recommends that provosts work together with library deans to measure their own information literacy efforts to better document the library's connection to student success and retention if it is important for the institution to do so. Perhaps this approach could provide more concrete connections between the library and increased retention or demonstrate the need for the library to focus its efforts on other campus-wide initiatives.

Be Mindful of the Critiques of Critical Librarianship

It may be increasingly important for provosts and library deans or directors to see this connection because of “increasing demands in higher education for efficiency and assessment.” (Meier, 2016, 264). However, this study also recommends that both provosts and library deans or directors consider the criticisms of current library assessment practices found in the literature of critical librarianship when proceeding with data collection meant to tie the library more directly to student success and retention. Most notable are Seale (2017) and Jones and Salo (2018) who argued against the concepts of higher education and librarianship that mirror the concepts of New Public Management, yet still argue that assessment of libraries is still possible while respecting the humanity of students. Accepting more humanizing data collection should not present

a challenge to provosts or library deans, who both acknowledge the validity of a variety of data in both the quantitative and qualitative data collected for this study. As one library dean noted in their interview, “It’s a weird philosophical place for me to be in right now because I mean I really do value the privacy and I care tremendously about that. But to ensure some of our survival we need to share the ROI.” Provosts and library deans should be working together to find ways forward to demonstrate the library’s value and respect the privacy and humanity of students.

Communication and Partnership are Keys to Success

The sentiment that library deans or directors and provosts should be more communicative leads to the last recommendation of this study: that communication and partnership be the most important component for a successful professional relationship between library deans or directors and their provosts. Both provosts and library directors in this study nearly unanimously point to good relationships with each other in the qualitative data. Where the relationships are described as positive, the deans, directors, and provosts all describe their interactions with each other as a proactive partnership, where each group is looking for how they can help bring the library in to support the mission of the university in a meaningful way. Where the relationship suffered, it was mentioned that the provost or library dean or director did not “understand” the library or the mission of the university. This is echoed in the literature, where Plotnikoff (2016) discusses the importance of communication and partnership as being crucial components of the NPG framework.

Limitations of the Study

Though the study did yield useful results that provide important implications and recommendations for practice, there were some limitations to the study that are important to discuss. One of these limitations is the relatively small sample size compared with other similar studies, such as Lynch, et al. (2007), Meier (2016), and Murray and Ireland (2018). This sample size was purposefully designed to provide responses from deans, directors, and provosts that were under a single university system so that differing methods of funding or governance would not influence the results. However, it did mean that there would not be a large enough sample size, even with 100% participation, to conduct meaningful inferential statistical tests on the dataset. Instead the survey had to rely on descriptive statistics, noting top choices of respondents, but always careful not to imply any statistical relationships within the data.

The design of the study to only focus on the USG, though helpful for eliminating the differences that result from a variety of governance and funding system, provides another limitation. The conclusions may prove helpful to those working in private institutions or those in states with a public higher education system that bears little resemblance to Georgia's, but ultimately, the results are not generalizable across all these types of institutions. It could be that the results might be similar, but it was outside the scope of this study to determine if that is a reasonable conclusion. More research studies need to be done on this topic in every variety of higher education governance structure to truly determine what results are generalizable across systems and which are not.

Suggestions for Future Research

The results of this study suggest several additional paths for further research. The first suggestion is to validate these findings through conducting a similar study at a similar university system in another state. This will allow for a chance for a similar study to yield results and be compared to the original. If the results of subsequent studies yield similar results, then the conclusions of this study would be more strongly validated.

Another suggestion arose from the qualitative interview data, where both provosts and library deans or directors discussed options that were not included on the quantitative survey. Most notable among these were the library's role in providing information literacy instruction and in engagement with students through programming. Though options like undergraduate research support might include information literacy, the way that provosts and library deans or directors discussed the concept of information literacy went beyond basic literacy help. A quantitative study that includes these options and is distributed to a wider population could provide the opportunity to determine whether including these options might change how provosts and library deans or directors respond to the quantitative survey.

In addition to additional questions, another suggestion for further research would be a nationwide quantitative survey that looks at both provosts and academic library deans or directors. Such an avenue of research could provide a sample size large enough to perform inferential statistics to better determine any relationships in the dataset. In addition, it could provide answers about any differences between private and public institutions, as well as any differences between different types of public university systems. In addition, a larger sample size could do breakdowns on Carnegie

classifications, rather than the USG designation of this study to provide a better picture of how it relates to other studies in the literature.

Though a significant portion of this study sought to determine how libraries can make effective funding requests, the qualitative interview results suggest that libraries do not get to make such requests often. Therefore, another suggested path for research is a study into how libraries are asking for funding and whether this takes the form of the annual budget, end-of-year budget requests, or regular non-capital funding requests. Though the qualitative results of this study showed that requests for additional funding are not a regular occurrence for libraries in the USG, a more detailed study of library finances could be useful. If library deans or directors want to be effective at providing their library with better funding, then they should be focusing their efforts into the areas of funding where they can have the most impact. If small non-capital funding requests are not a common occurrence for academic libraries, then it would make sense for library deans or directors to concentrate their efforts on more effective areas. Such a study would be critical for identifying what those areas might be.

In addition to studies about funding, it is important for future research to explore studies of libraries that are pursuing the recommendations within this study. These studies could provide more insight to whether the potential paths discovered in examining this study's data are truly effective solutions for academic libraries. For example, a potential study might examine the attitudes of provosts and deans or directors at a university or small group of universities where information literacy has become a component of the curriculum in some way. In addition to individual case studies, it may prove useful to do some comparative studies on libraries that are engaging in practices

recommended by this study and those who do not. This could help better determine the extent to which the recommendations of this study are helpful in improving communication about funding requests and the perception of the library's role in retention and success initiative.

Because this study recommended paying attention to the recommendations of critical librarianship, it is important that studies be conducted on the attitudes of provosts and deans or directors concerning the arguments of these scholars. This research should focus on both groups willingness to work with more ethical data collection methods such as those recommended by Seale (2017) and Jones and Salo (2018). If there is little objection to these methods of assessment, then the argument that they should be incorporated into library data will be much stronger. However, should serious objections arise, it will become important to explore these objections to push the scholarship of critical librarianship forward based on the findings.

Finally, because the qualitative data from this study yielded important results about the relationship between provosts and library deans or directors, this study recommends more qualitative studies on the subject. This study's review of the literature found no examples of such qualitative papers outside of Robertson (2015). It should be noted that such research will not be easy, and might be best conducted at a national scale, due to the difficulty of finding provosts who have time in their schedules for such in-depth research. However, more qualitative inquiry that seeks to answer some of the questions this study raises would be a great benefit to those studying both general higher education administration and the administration of academic libraries.

Summary

The twenty-first century has seen dramatic changes arrive in the landscape of American higher education. Two of the biggest changes have involved an increasing focus on retention and student success metric and declining budgets that have forced every department and unit that make up colleges and universities to make much more convincing arguments to secure the funding they need to operate. Academic libraries have not been immune to these changes and have found themselves no longer taken for granted as “the heart of the university” as Lynch et al. (2007) noted.

This study sought to determine both the current state of academic libraries and suggestions for improving their situation on campus by examining the communication preferences of academic library deans or directors and provosts for funding requests as well as their perceptions about the library’s involvement in campus-wide initiative for retention and student success. Though other studies had examined either provosts’ or library deans’ or directors’ opinions on similar issues, they either exclusively focused on provosts (Lynch, et al., 2007; Robertson, 2015; Murray & Ireland, 2018) or deans or directors (Meier, 2016). By examining both in the same project, this study provided results that allow the attitudes of the two groups to be effectively compared to develop initial recommendations and baseline data for future studies.

Though the study found some differences that existed among the communication preference and perceptions about participation among provosts and library deans or directors, these differences do not appear to be insurmountable. By switching the ways that they communicate their data to concise summaries provided in annual reports, library deans can make much more effective cases for their funding requests. Since both provosts

and library deans seem to agree on the importance of information literacy, focusing on efforts to improve it at their institutions could improve perceptions and actually provide documented evidence of the library's contribution to success metrics and student retention. In addition, provosts may want to discuss other ways libraries are working to contribute to student retention with library deans or directors to see what other promising methods might be pursued. The results of this study suggest there is room for both groups to work to come to an understanding about these areas of difference. The key for success suggested by this study is that both groups need to be willing to dialogue and see each other as colleagues working together to better their institutions. Both library deans or directors and provosts need to see the library as full partners in the campus' success. As one library dean noted during the qualitative interview process, "It's important to show everything in context of it and that's why I use the words partners and collaborators. To show that you are just as invested in everything that is going on in the campus as everybody else is and you have a role to play."

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APPENDIX A:

Provost Quantitative Survey Email Solicitation

Good morning _____,

My name is Michael Holt and I am a doctoral student in Public Administration at Valdosta State University. I am writing to request your participation in a brief survey about your communication preferences with your library dean or director, as well as your perceptions about the library's role in university-wide initiatives, including those related to retention and student success. Your responses to this survey will help provide the study with important data about how library deans or directors are communicating with their provosts and how involved they perceive the library to be in university-wide initiatives.

The survey is very brief and should take less than five minutes to complete. Please click the link below to go to the survey website (or copy and paste the link into your internet browser) and begin the survey.

<http://bit.ly/USGProvosts>

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and all your responses will be kept confidential. There is a question that asks for your email address for those willing to participate in a thirty minute follow-up interview, but this question is completely voluntary and neither this data, nor any other personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses to any reports of these data. The Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved this survey. Should you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me at moholt@valdosta.edu or 229-333-7105.

APPENDIX B:
Provost Quantitative Survey

Dissertation Research - USG Provost Survey

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q13 You are being asked to participate in an interview as part of a research study entitled, "Closing the Loop: An Examination of University System of Georgia Provosts' and Academic Library Deans' and Directors' Preferences for Communication and Attitudes Concerning the Contribution of the Academic Library to the University's Mission," which is being conducted by Michael Holt, a doctoral student and faculty member at Valdosta State University. The purpose of this study is to determine Provosts' perceptions of academic libraries' contribution to their institutions' missions and how academic library deans or directors can best communicate these contributions to their Provosts. The interviews will be audio taped in order to accurately capture your concerns, opinions, and ideas. Once the recordings have been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your participation in the interview will serve as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 years of age or older. Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Michael Holt at moholt@valdosta.edu. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.

- I agree and wish to proceed (1)
- I do not agree and do not wish to proceed (2)

Skip To: Q13 If You are being asked to participate in an interview as part of a research study entitled, "Closing... = I do not agree and do not wish to proceed

Page Break

Q1 What is the University System of Georgia designation for your institution?

- Research University (1)
 - Comprehensive University (2)
 - State University (3)
 - Four Year State College (4)
-

Q2 Is your institution classified as an HBCU?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Q3 What is the current enrollment at your institution?

- 0-10,000 (1)
 - 10,001 - 20,000 (2)
 - 20,001 - 30,000 (3)
 - 30,001 + (4)
-

Q4 What is the faculty status of librarians at your institution?

- Professional or Classified Staff Only (1)
- Non-tenure track Faculty Only (2)
- Non-tenure track faculty and Professional or Classified Staff (3)
- Tenure track Faculty Only (4)
- Tenure track Faculty and Professional or Classified Staff (5)

Page Break _____

Q5 How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in:

	Very Involved (1)	Somewhat Involved (2)	Marginally Involved (3)	Not Involved (4)	Not Applicable (5)
Undergraduate Retention Initiatives (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enrollment Initiatives (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Academic Success (GPA or other indicators) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty Research Productivity (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accreditation (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in: = Undergraduate Retention Initiatives [Not Involved]

Or How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in: = Undergraduate Retention Initiatives [Not Applicable]

Or How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in: = Undergraduate Retention Initiatives [Marginally Involved]

Q6 If you do not perceive your library to be active in undergraduate retention efforts, please indicate why.

- The library dean/director has not prioritized retention. (1)
- The library does not have sufficient staff. (2)
- Our institution has not prioritized retention initiatives. (3)
- The campus does not recognize the library's role in contributing to retention. (4)
- Other (please specify) (5) _____

Q7 How involved is your institution's library with each of the following high-impact practices?

	Very Involved (1)	Somewhat Involved (2)	Marginally Involved (3)	Not Involved (4)	Not Applicable (5)
First year seminars or First year experiences (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing-intensive courses (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Undergraduate Research (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service or Community Based Learning (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Capstone Courses or Projects (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 In your view, does your institution's academic library have an impact on students' decisions to continue enrollment?

- Yes, based on documented evidence. (1)
 - Yes, based on anecdotal evidence. (2)
 - Yes, based on a mix of anecdotal and documented evidence. (3)
 - Unclear. (4)
 - No. (5)
-

Q9 Suppose your institution's library dean or director approached you with a moderate (noncapital) funding request, such as for new positions or an increase in the collections budget, that competed with funding requests from other (revenue-generating) academic units. Please rate the influence each of the following types of data would have on your prioritization of the library's funding request over those of the other academic units.

No influence = I would definitely not prioritize this request

Low influence = I would probably not prioritize the request

Moderate influence = I would consider prioritizing the request

High influence = I would prioritize the request over others

	No Influence (1)	Low Influence (2)	Moderate Influence (3)	High Influence (4)
Basic usage data, such as article download or checkout stats (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
User satisfaction data (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty feedback (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Endorsement by other deans (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrated correlation of the request with increased retention or success metrics. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrated correlation of the request with faculty research productivity. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focus group or qualitative data (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anecdotal evidence (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 What would be the most effective method of communicating the types of data you think would be most influential with you in a way that would most likely improve library funding?

- Annual Report (1)
- Annual Budget Presentation (2)
- Email (3)
- Presentation or Meeting (4)
- Included with funding request (5)
- Other (Please Specify) (6) _____

Page Break _____

Display This Question:

If You are being asked to participate in an interview as part of a research study entitled, "Closing... = I do not agree and do not wish to proceed

Q13 You have chosen to exit the survey. Thank you for your time.

End of Block: Default Question Block

APPENDIX C:

Library Dean/Director Quantitative Survey Email Solicitation

Good morning _____,

My name is Michael Holt and I am a doctoral student in Public Administration at Valdosta State University. I am writing to request your participation in a brief survey about your communication preferences with your provost, as well as your perceptions about the library's role in university-wide initiatives, including those related to retention and student success. Your responses to this survey will help provide the study with important data about how library deans or directors are communicating with their provosts and how involved they perceive the library to be in university-wide initiatives.

The survey is very brief and should take less than five minutes to complete. Please click the link below to go to the survey website (or copy and paste the link into your internet browser) and begin the survey.

<http://bit.ly/USGDeanDirector>

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and all your responses will be kept confidential. There is a question that asks for your email address for those willing to participate in a thirty minute follow-up interview, but this question is completely voluntary and neither this data, nor any other personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses to any reports of these data. The Valdosta State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved this survey. Should you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me at moholt@valdosta.edu or 229-333-7105.

APPENDIX D:
Library Dean/Director Quantitative Survey

Dissertation Research - USG Library Dean/Director Survey

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q13 You are being asked to participate in an interview as part of a research study entitled, "Closing the Loop: An Examination of University System of Georgia Provosts' and Academic Library Deans' and Directors' Preferences for Communication and Attitudes Concerning the Contribution of the Academic Library to the University's Mission," which is being conducted by Michael Holt, a doctoral student and faculty member at Valdosta State University. The purpose of this study is to determine Provosts' perceptions of academic libraries' contribution to their institutions' missions and how academic library deans or directors can best communicate these contributions to their Provosts. The interviews will be audio taped in order to accurately capture your concerns, opinions, and ideas. Once the recordings have been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed. No one, including the researcher, will be able to associate your responses with your identity. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your participation in the interview will serve as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 years of age or older. Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Michael Holt at moholt@valdosta.edu. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.

- I agree and wish to proceed (1)
- I do not agree and do not wish to proceed (2)

Skip To: Q15 If You are being asked to participate in an interview as part of a research study entitled, "Closing... = I do not agree and do not wish to proceed

Page Break

Q1 What is the University System of Georgia designation for your institution?

- Research University (1)
 - Comprehensive University (2)
 - State University (3)
 - Four Year State College (4)
-

Q2 Is your institution classified as an HBCU?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Q3 What is the current enrollment at your institution?

- 0-10,000 (1)
 - 10,001 - 20,000 (2)
 - 20,001 - 30,000 (3)
 - 30,001 + (4)
-

Q14 What is your title at your institution?

- Dean (1)
 - Director (2)
 - Vice President (3)
 - Other (Please Specify) (4) _____
-

Q4 What is the faculty status of librarians at your institution?

- Professional or Classified Staff Only (1)
 - Non-tenure track Faculty Only (2)
 - Non-tenure track faculty and Professional or Classified Staff (3)
 - Tenure track Faculty Only (4)
 - Tenure track Faculty and Professional or Classified Staff (5)
-

Page Break _____

Q5 How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in:

	Very Involved (1)	Somewhat Involved (2)	Marginally Involved (3)	Not Involved (4)	Not Applicable (5)
Undergraduate Retention Initiatives (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enrollment Initiatives (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Academic Success (GPA or other indicators) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty Research Productivity (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accreditation (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in: = Undergraduate Retention Initiatives [Not Involved]

Or How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in: = Undergraduate Retention Initiatives [Not Applicable]

Or How involved do you perceive your institution's academic library to be in: = Undergraduate Retention Initiatives [Marginally Involved]

Q6 If you do not perceive your library to be active in undergraduate retention efforts, please indicate why.

- I have chosen to not prioritize retention. (1)
- The library does not have sufficient staff. (2)
- Our institution has not prioritized retention initiatives. (3)
- The campus does not recognize the library's role in contributing to retention. (4)
- Other (please specify) (5) _____

Q7 How involved is your institution's library with each of the following high-impact practices?

	Very Involved (1)	Somewhat Involved (2)	Marginally Involved (3)	Not Involved (4)	Not Applicable (5)
First year seminars or First year experiences (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing-intensive courses (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Undergraduate Research (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service or Community Based Learning (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Capstone Courses or Projects (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 In your view, does your institution's academic library have an impact on students' decisions to continue enrollment?

- Yes, based on documented evidence. (1)
 - Yes, based on anecdotal evidence. (2)
 - Yes, based on a mix of anecdotal and documented evidence. (3)
 - Unclear. (4)
 - No. (5)
-

Q9 Suppose you wanted to approach the Provost of your institution with a moderate (noncapital) funding request, such as for new positions or an increase in the collections budget, that competed with funding requests from other (revenue-generating) academic units. How likely would you be to include or reference the following data types to help support the request?

No influence = I would definitely not prioritize this request
Low influence = I would probably not prioritize the request

Moderate influence = I would consider prioritizing the request

High influence = I would prioritize the request over others

	Would never include (1)	Not likely to include (2)	Likely to include (3)	Would always include (4)
Basic usage data, such as article download or checkout stats (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
User satisfaction data (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty feedback (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Endorsement by other deans (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrated correlation of the request with increased retention or success metrics. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrated correlation of the request with faculty research productivity. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focus group or qualitative data (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anecdotal evidence (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 What would be the most effective method of communicating the types of data you think would be most influential to the provost in a way that would most likely improve library funding?

- Annual Report (1)
- Annual Budget Presentation (2)
- Email (3)
- Presentation or Meeting (4)
- Included with funding request (5)
- Other (Please Specify) (6) _____

Page Break _____

Display This Question:

If You are being asked to participate in an interview as part of a research study entitled, "Closing... = I do not agree and do not wish to proceed

Q15 You have chosen to exit the survey. Thank you for your time.

End of Block: Default Question Block

APPENDIX E:
Provost Qualitative Interview Schedule

Extended Interview Schedule for Provosts

You are being asked to participate in a research project entitled “Closing the Loop: An Examination of University System of Georgia Provosts’ and Academic Library Deans’ and Directors’ Preferences for Communication and Attitudes Concerning the Contribution of the Academic Library to the University’s Mission”, which is being conducted by Michael Holt, a faculty member at Valdosta State University. The purpose of this study is to determine Provosts' perceptions of academic libraries' contribution to their institutions' missions and how academic library deans or directors can best communicate these contributions to their Provosts. While you may not receive any direct benefit for participating, we hope that this study will contribute to better communication and more successful outcomes between Library Deans or Directors and their Provosts.

Though the researcher will be aware of your identity, it will not be revealed in the final research product. There will be recordings made of this interview, but these recordings will not be kept longer than needed to transcribe them. The recordings will be destroyed upon completion of their transcription. No identifying information will be retained in the transcription and any institutional or personal names will be anonymized in the transcription. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate in the interview, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your completion of the survey serves as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 or older.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Michael Holt at moholt@valdosta.edu. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.

1. What kinds of data do you think would be most important for you to see coming from your institution’s library? Why are they so important for you?
2. Are there any kinds of data that you would consider to be less important for you? Why are they not as important for you?
3. Describe the role you think the academic library has to play in your university’s efforts to retain students or in your institutions efforts to ensure students succeed.
4. Do you think your institutional designation has any impact on the library’s perceived role in retention at your institution?

5. Can you tell me about a time in which the library at your school did something you felt was a particularly great initiative to help improve retention or student success?
6. In this library initiative, what, if any, data did they provide as proof of their initiative's success?
7. Can you tell me about any particularly strong or well-composed funding requests you have seen from your library? What helped make their case convincing or otherwise stand out to you?
8. Are there any kinds of data or arguments that, in your mind, would be superfluous or otherwise ineffectual in a library funding request?
9. Can you describe what kinds of data an ideal funding request from the library would include?
10. Is there anything else you would like to add about the relationship between Provosts and Academic Library Deans or Directors that we may not have addressed in the preceding questions?

APPENDIX F:

Library Dean/Director Qualitative Interview Schedule

Extended Interview Schedule for Library Deans and Directors

You are being asked to participate in a research project entitled “Closing the Loop: An Examination of University System of Georgia Provosts’ and Academic Library Deans’ and Directors’ Preferences for Communication and Attitudes Concerning the Contribution of the Academic Library to the University’s Mission”, which is being conducted by Michael Holt, a faculty member at Valdosta State University. The purpose of this study is to determine Provosts' perceptions of academic libraries' contribution to their institutions' missions and how academic library deans or directors can best communicate these contributions to their Provosts. While you may not receive any direct benefit for participating, we hope that this study will contribute to better communication and more successful outcomes between Library Deans or Directors and their Provosts.

Though the researcher will be aware of your identity, it will not be revealed in the final research product. There will be recordings made of this interview, but these recordings will not be kept longer than needed to transcribe them. The recordings will be destroyed upon completion of their transcription. No identifying information will be retained in the transcription and any institutional or personal names will be anonymized in the transcription. Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate in the interview, to stop responding at any time, or to skip any questions that you do not want to answer.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. Your completion of the survey serves as your voluntary agreement to participate in this research project and your certification that you are 18 or older.

Questions regarding the purpose or procedures of the research should be directed to Michael Holt at moholt@valdosta.edu. This study has been exempted from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in accordance with Federal regulations. The IRB, a university committee established by Federal law, is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at 229-253-2947 or irb@valdosta.edu.

1. What kinds of data do you think are most important for libraries to collect? Why are they so important for you?
2. Are there any kinds of data that you would consider to be less important for you? Why are they not as important for you?
3. Describe the role you think the academic library has to play in your university’s efforts to retain students or in your institutions efforts to ensure students succeed.
4. Do you think your institutional designation has any impact on the library’s perceived role in retention at your institution?

5. Can you tell me about a time in which your library did something you felt was a particularly great initiative to help improve retention or student success?
6. In this library initiative, what, if any, data did you collect to help demonstrate the initiative's success?
7. Can you tell me about a successful (non-capital) funding request you submitted? What do you think was the key to its success?
8. Are there any kinds of data or arguments that, in your mind, would be superfluous or otherwise ineffectual in a library funding request?
9. Can you describe what you would include in a typical funding request to the provost?
10. Is there anything else you would like to add about the relationship between Provosts and Academic Library Deans or Directors that we may not have addressed in the preceding questions?

APPENDIX G:
Qualitative Data Codebook

Qualitative Data Codebook

Code	Name	Description	Example
RDR	Request Data - Retention	A dean/director or provost discusses a preference for using/receiving data tied to retention or student success.	Well if that's available, yeah I'd like to see data connecting the library to retention.
RDRN	Request Data – Retention Negative	A dean/director or provost discusses problems with using retention data in libraries	I think the correlation between libraries is too tough to demonstrate in a way that is useful to me.
RDU	Request Data – Usage	A dean/director or provost discusses a preference for using/receiving data tied to library usage	So, what we really want to know is are students utilizing the resources? So, it would be helpful, to me, to see things like how many students are engaged in the many training sessions that you do. How many students does that reach? How many students utilize the resources at the reference desk? And how that compares over time.
RDUN	Request Data – Usage Negative	A dean/director or provost discusses problems with using basic usage data.	This basic usage data doesn't tell me anything about how the library is really

			being used. I'd like more than that when considering a funding request.
RDO	Request Data - Other	A dean/director or provost discusses a preference for using/receiving data that is not related to library usage, retention, or success.	If possible, I'd like to see data on the number of grant requests the library is participating in during a given year.
IPA	Initiative, Participation - Anecdotal	A library dean/director or provost discusses perceived or observed library contributions to university initiatives including success and retention programs that are based on anecdotal evidence.	We never really had a formal assessment for this program, but I did hear from several students that they liked participating.
IPD	Initiative, Participation - Direct	A library dean/director or provost discusses perceived or observed library contributions to university initiatives including success and retention programs that are based on direct evidence.	After it was all done and we had students met with faculty in groups to go over the readings they did, they did a short 3-5question assessment for both students and the faculty who participated. It was overwhelmingly successful. The students enjoyed it and liked being able to pick the articles. The faculty also enjoyed it as well. We're going to make some changes next year based off of the assessments too. So, they provided data for that.
IPNP	Initiative, Participation - No Participation	A library dean/director or provost discusses that they do not perceive or observe the library playing a significant role in university initiatives in any measurable way.	Well, I'm just not sure that the library is playing a big role in our university initiatives right now. I think that could be on the verge of

			changing, but it is not currently happening.
PIS	Preference – Related to Institutional Size	A library dean/director or provost mentions that their preferences have to do with the size/classification of the university.	I hope so. That's my number one job over the next couple of years. So one of the things that actually attracted me to this school is that its an access institution in the USG. Which means are scores are lower to accept students than in even you know other schools, really anywhere. So we have a social justice mission to play and we need to be an equalizing force in these students lives.
PNIS	Preference – Not Related to Institutional Size	A library dean/director or provost mentions that their preferences are unrelated to the size/classification of the university.	Well philosophically I would say it shouldn't. What happens on the ground at a big research university might think of it differently, but to be quite honest with you, I think its important regardless of what the institutional mission is.
CC	Campus Collaboration	A library dean/director or provost suggests the importance of collaborating with other campus units	I'd really like to see our librarians go out and forge a partnership with the academic advising department on campus. I think there's some opportunities there.
FRMP	Funding Requests – Materials Positive	A library dean/director or provost speaks positively about a funding request involving purchasing books/databases/etc...	the only one that I have been able to get any kind of success with, I've asked on numerous occasions to have

			the overall budget, the base budget increased and umm the answer has always been no, but a couple of years ago, we got a one-time increase to purchase books.
FRMN	Funding Requests – Materials Negative	A library dean/director or provost speaks negatively about a funding request involving purchasing books/databases/etc...	“I just know.. and its not that its ineffectual by any means, but I know that you need more money for databases, you need more access to online stuff. That to me is kind of an ongoing request and if that's your number one request every year, what it tells me is you are not thinking out of the box.”
FRDP	Funding Requests – Data Provided	A library dean/director or provost speaks of the usage of data in funding requests.	So with all of that in mind, obviously, the thing we have to focus on is what kinds of data are there that suggest that this proposal is either going to be dealing with a perceived weakness and of course why is it perceived weakness and what data do we have that shows it's a weakness?
FRDDR	Funding Request – Data Depends on Request	A library dean/director or provost speaks of the data used in funding	So anyway, in terms of the kinds of data that we

		requests being dependent on the type of request being made.	would attempt to provide, a lot of it depending again on what it is that we're asking to fund.
GUD	Granular Usage Data	A library dean/director or provost discusses using usage data with more granularity than library-wide numbers.	<p>“To do that at that level we need better data and we need more refined granularity. So in the past I've used website views, book checkouts item checkouts, number of instruction sessions. I think we need to move to more granular data as time goes on.</p> <p>“</p>
FYP	First-Year Programs or Seminars	A library dean/director or provost discusses library participation in first-year seminars or programs	<p>“I kinda mentioned it a little before, I think when some of the library faculty got very involved in our first year seminar courses and like I said they helped transform and change our first year seminar courses and I think that was one of those... That's where I started really seeing that the library faculty were working with the center for student success, working with our academic advisors, working with our faculty and really helping revamp the first year seminar course”</p>

DQR	Difficulty Quantifying Retention	A library dean/director or provost discusses the difficulty tying library participation to retention data.	The challenge with tying library data to retention is that there's confounding factors.
URIL	Undergraduate Research/Information Literacy	A library dean/director or provost discusses the importance of libraries for undergraduate research or information literacy	Getting back to library instruction, its in this day and age, probably far more important than it was 25 years ago. The reason I say that is because students now with google available to them think they know how to do research
LC	Learning Commons	A library dean/director or provost discusses a learning commons in connection with the library	They gave my institution a small cap project and the librarians came up with this concept of the learning commons and it was brilliant. It was repurposing a building, they renovated and repurposed it.
EWS	Engagement With Students	A library dean/director or provost discusses the library's role in engaging students	Ok, I think its a very important role, I think that the library needs to help engage our students.
FRT	Funding Request - Technology	A library dean/director or provost discusses a funding request for technology	Actually ok, the poster printer? I'm not gonna lie that was a big pain to get. It ended up coming down to I had to work with the VP Of Finance to get this poster printer purchased and it was expensive.
FRSP	Funding Request – Strategic Planning	A library dean/director or provost discusses a funding request tied to strategic planning	In our strategic plan, student success is our first priority, so that's what we focused on in our funding request.

FRST	Funding Request - Staff	A library dean/director or provost discusses a funding request for staff	Based on the data we had, we decided to request additional staff positions in the library.
FRR	Funding Request - Research	A library dean/director or provost discusses a funding request tied to graduate/faculty research	What we identified is there was a need for additional support training on how to work with... find and work with data. And so we very intentionally have built a research data services team and its not about data... I mean they will assist faculty with research data management issues, but its really more about teaching students and faculty.. It tends to be a lot of grad students
FRI	Funding Request Innovation	A library dean/director or provost discusses a funding request tied to innovative thinking	Tell me what it is that you really need to make a library to be an efficient and innovative place for students to come and learn and to be successful there.

APPENDIX H:
Krippendorff's Alpha SPSS Output

Run MATRIX procedure:

Krippendorff's Alpha Reliability Estimate

Alpha	LL95%CI	UL95%CI	Units	Observrs	Pairs
Nominal	.8224	.7158	.9112	20.0000	3.0000 60.0000

Probability (q) of failure to achieve an alpha of at least alphamin:

alphamin	q
.9000	.9500
.8000	.2570
.7000	.0220
.6700	.0040
.6000	.0000
.5000	.0000

Number of bootstrap samples:

1000

APPENDIX I:
IRB Approval



Institutional Review Board (IRB)
For the Protection of Human Research Participants

PROTOCOL EXEMPTION REPORT

Protocol Number:	03666-2018	Investigator:	Mr. Michael Holt
		Supervising Faculty:	Dr. Alan Bernstein
PROJECT TITLE:	<i>Closing the Loop: An Examination of University System of Georgia Provosts' and Academic Library Deans' and Directors' Preferences for Communication and Attitudes Concerning the Contribution of the Academic Library to the University's Mission.</i>		

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DETERMINATION:

This research protocol is **Exempt** from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight under Exemption **Category 2**. Your research study may begin immediately. If the nature of the research project changes such that exemption criteria may no longer apply, please consult with the IRB Administrator (irb@valdosta.edu) before continuing your research.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- *Upon completion of your research study all compiled data must be securely maintained (locked file cabinet, password protected computer, etc.) and accessible only by the researcher for a minimum of 3 years.*
 - *In order to maintain informed consent requirements the Research Consent Statement must be read aloud to each participant at the start of the recorded interview and included in the final transcript.*
- If this box is checked, please submit any documents you revise to the IRB Administrator at irb@valdosta.edu to ensure an updated record of your exemption.**

Elizabeth Ann Olphie **10.25.2018**

Thank you for submitting an IRB application.

Elizabeth Ann Olphie, IRB Administrator

Please direct questions to irb@valdosta.edu or 229-253-2947.

Revised: 06.02.16

