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How to Use Existing Residential Networks to Promote the Value of the Library

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Recommended Citation

Andrus, Benjamin and Larrivee, Anne, "How to Use Existing Residential Networks to Promote the Value of the Library" (2014). *Library Scholarship*. 14.

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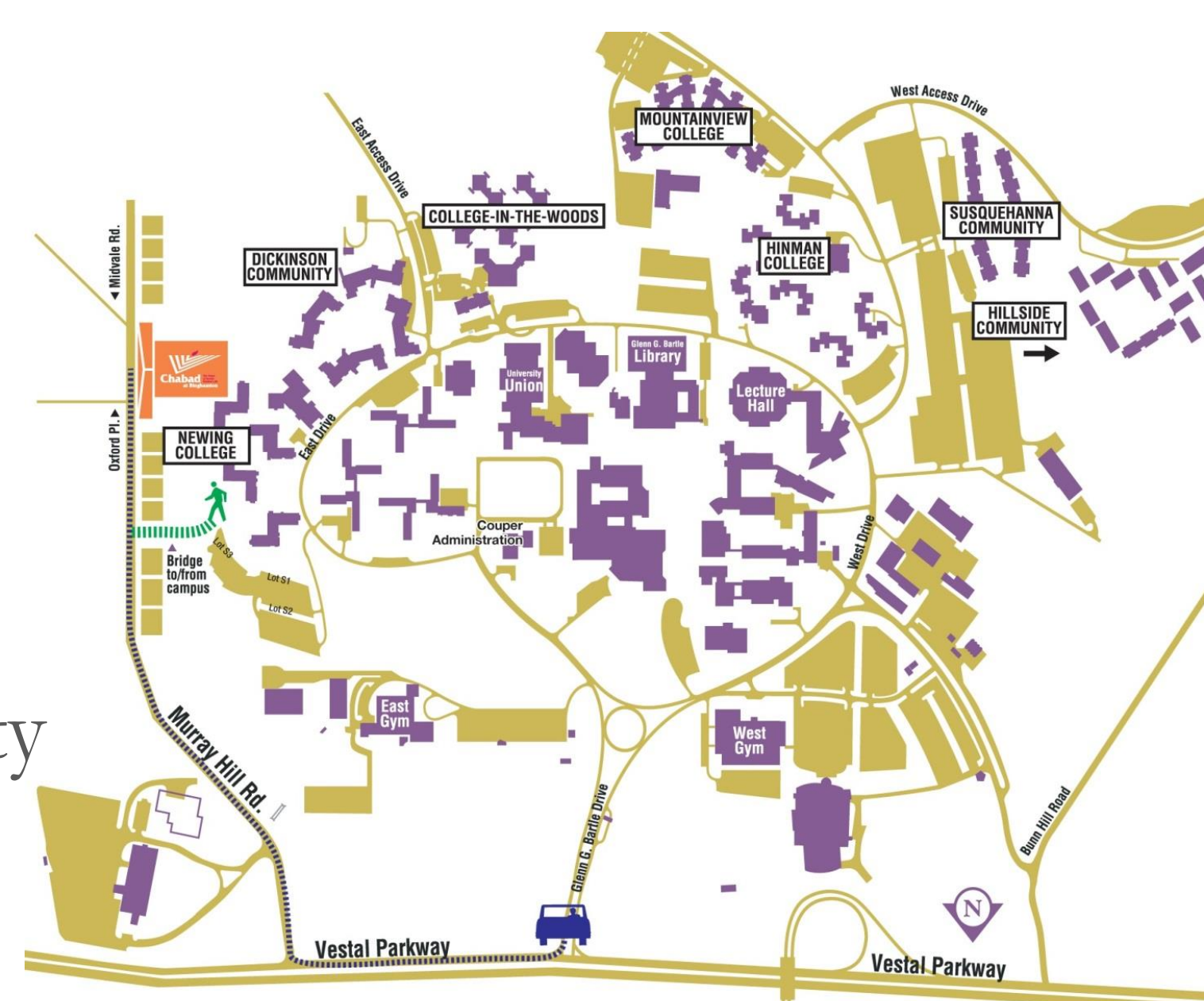
How to Use Existing Residential Networks to Promote the Value of the Library

Benjamin Andrus & Anne Larrivee

Residential Life at Binghamton University

Binghamton University has:

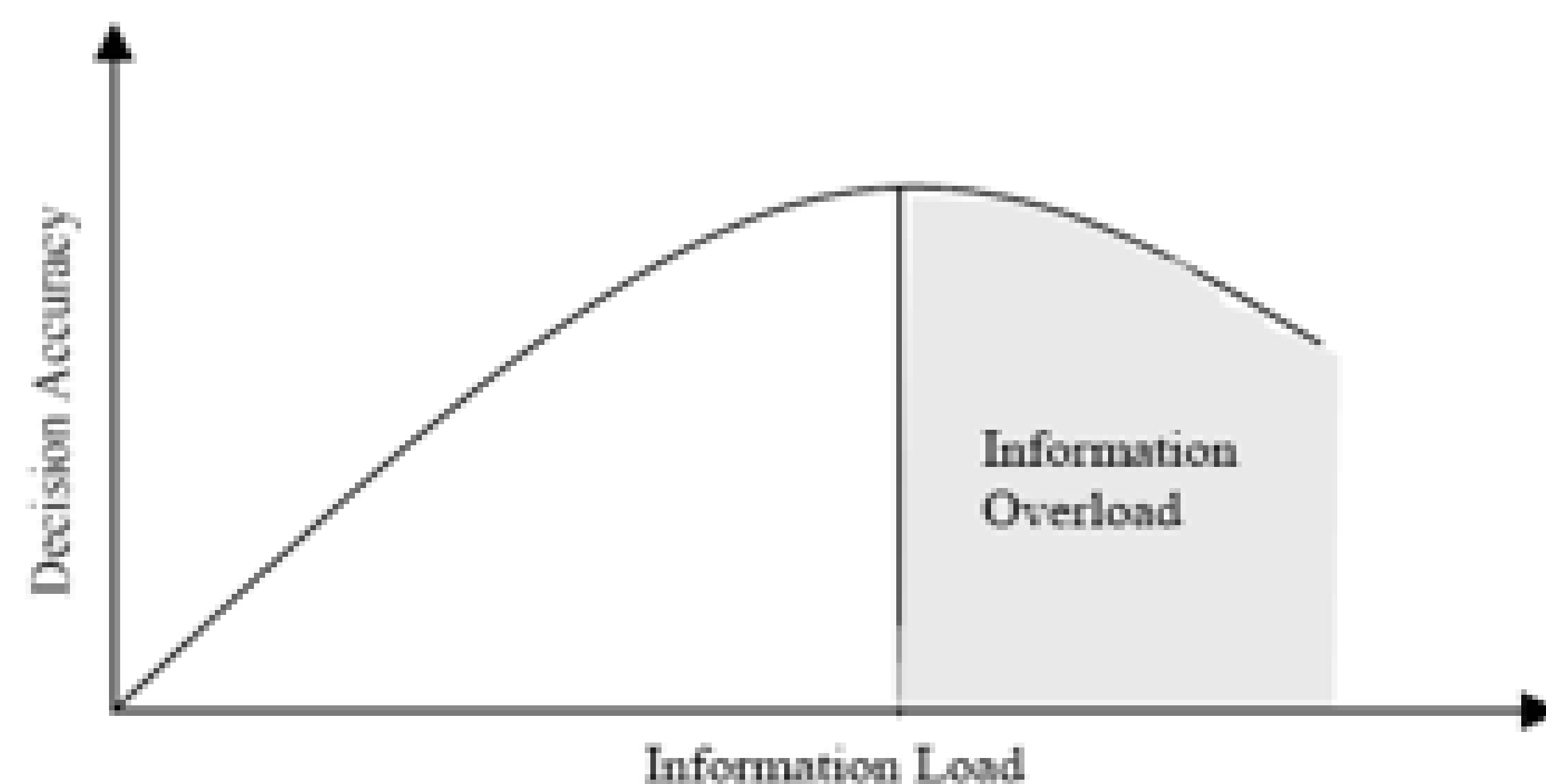
- over 14,500 students
- 6 dorm communities with 1,200-1,500 students per community



Since there is not an option for BU students to enroll in a mandatory library information literacy course, many students lack basic library-related knowledge.



Information Overload



Davis, Joseph G. and Ganeshan, Shayan, "Aversion to Loss and Information Overload: An Experimental Investigation" (2009). ICIS 2009 Proceedings. Paper 11. <http://aisel.aisnet.org/icis2009/11>

Inundation of campus services can be overwhelming to students, they may not remember library info they learned during a quick one-shot presentation their Freshmen year.

Utilizing RAs' Existing Social Networks to Plan Library-related Programs

The Library to Dorm Outreach Program was initiated in February 2011 to provide information literacy and promote library services to undergraduate students in the comfort of their own housing community.

Why work with RAs

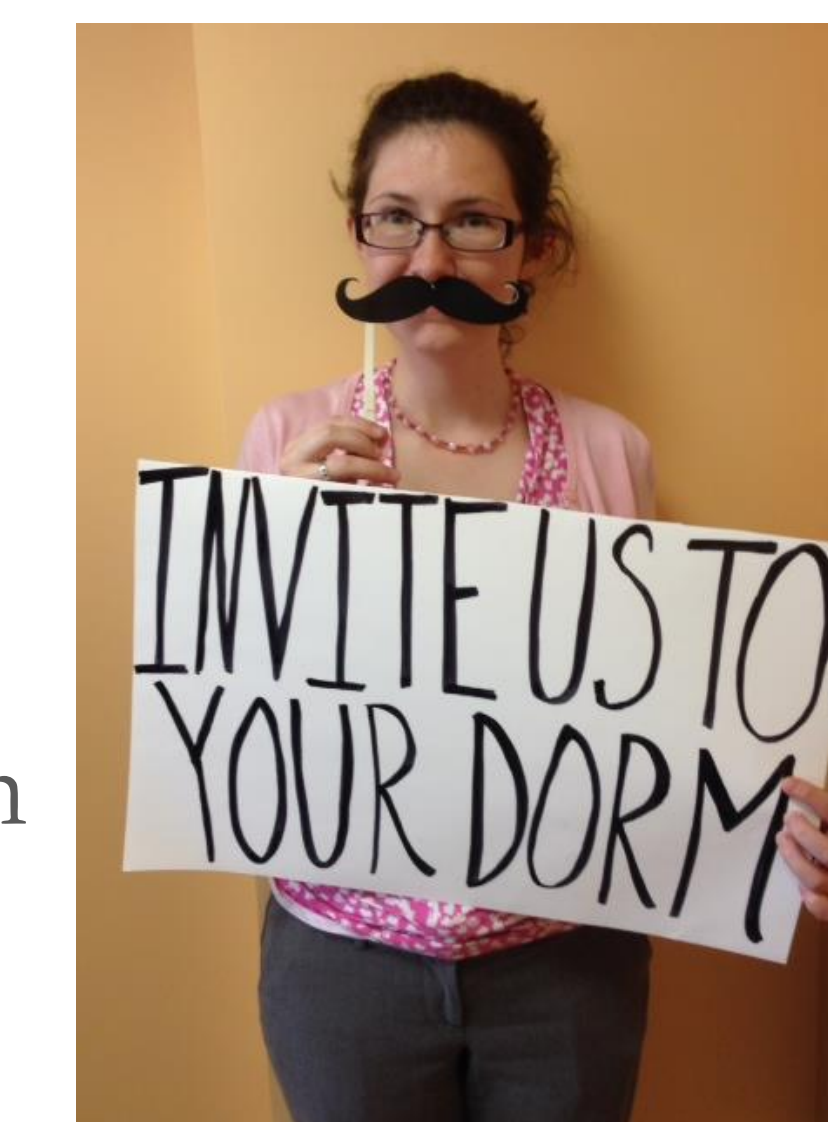
RAs' familiarity with their residents provide them with the insight to know what promotional methods and outreach strategies will work best within their residence halls. They are often urged to plan a certain number of events. The Library to Dorm Outreach program averages an attendance of 8-15 students.

Program Setup

- Librarians promote the program during Fall and Spring RA Training; the promo is usually 5 minutes and includes some type of memorable, comedic approach
- RAs will email us with a date and time, evenings tend to be preferred.
- Librarians offer to bring a projector and laptop, and meet RAs in dorm
- RAs are responsible for all the pre-planning of the program

Program Content

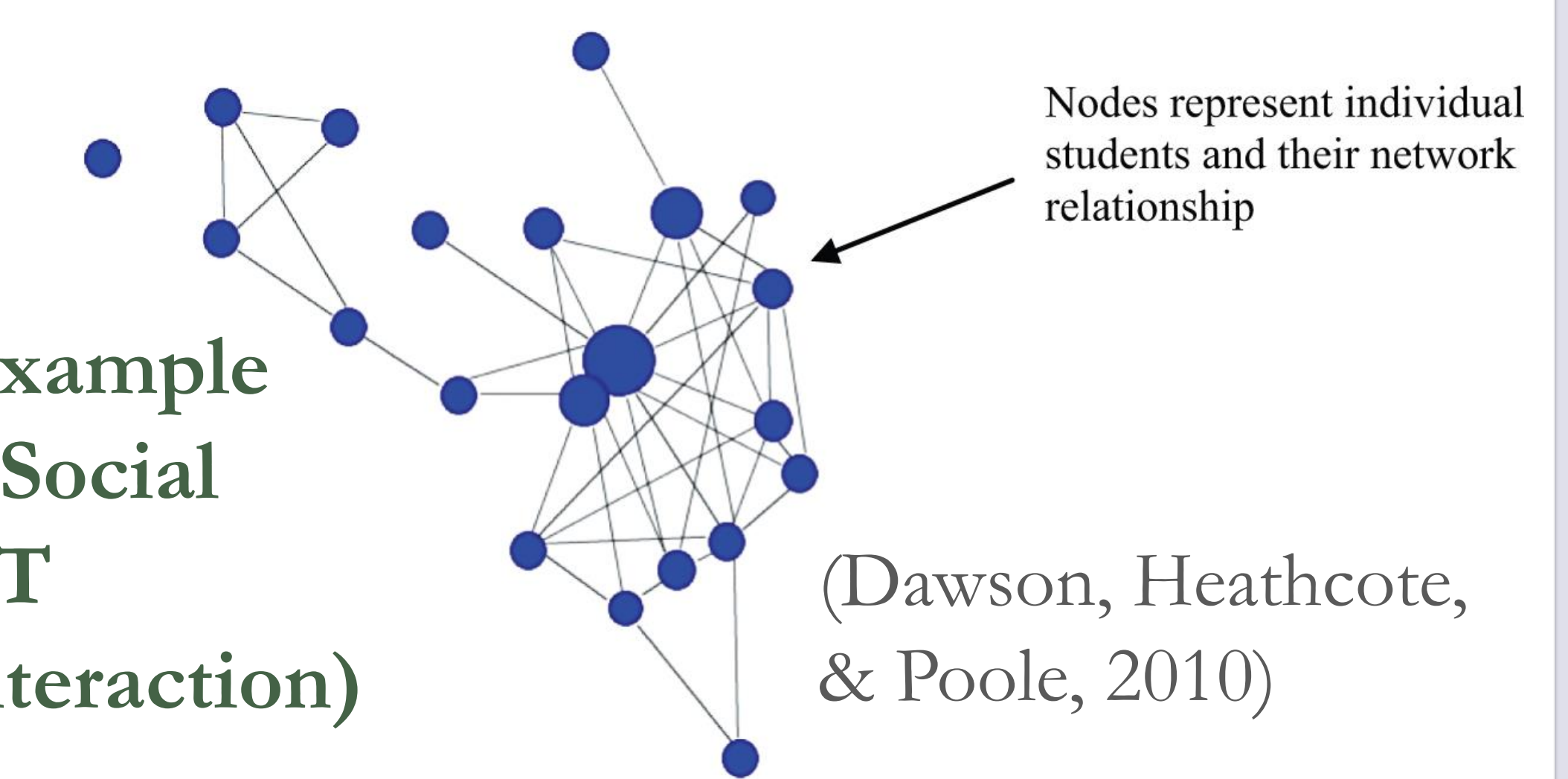
- **First Half-** Overview of library services, and helpful research strategies
- **Second Half-** Demo of e-resources: databases, Refworks, and explanation of subject headings, Boolean searching, and pros and cons of Google



Effective Elements of Library to Dorm Outreach

- Collaborative partnership with RAs
- Comfortable, familiar environment
- Quick paced, and no more than 30-45 minutes
- Desired incentives: food, games, social time, research tips

Examining Social Networks



Sociogram Example of a Student Social Network (ICT discussion interaction)

"A **social network** consists of a finite set or sets of actors and the relation or relations defined on them" (Wasserman, 1994, p.20)

- Social networks are linked to social capital because of the influence individuals can hold within their own network (Lin, 1999)
- A chronology of social networks, taken from the *Encyclopedia of Social Networks*, shows how networks have been used in religion, politics, conflicts, fandom, business, etc (Barnett, 2011)

Similar Programs

- Barnes, N., & Peyton, G. (2006). Reaching Out to the Net Generation on Campus: Promoting the MSU Libraries in the Residence Halls. *Public Services Quarterly*, 2(4), 47-68. doi:10.1300/J295v02n0403
- Kuchi, T., Mullen, L. B., & Tama-Bartels, S. (2004). Librarians without borders: Reaching out to students at a campus center. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 310-317
- Riehle, C., & Witt, M. C. (2009). Librarians in the Hall: Instructional Outreach in Campus Residences. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 16(2/3), 107-121. doi:10.1080/10691310902958616
- Strothmann, M. (2010). The Live-In Librarian: Developing Library Outreach to University Residence Halls. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 50(1), 48-58.