

PSICC 1-2 Report on the LibQual+ Survey

The User needs subcommittee of the Priority Strategic Initiative Coordinating Committee 1-2 has met throughout the fall term to discuss the results of the LibQual Survey of March 2001. The following is a discussion of our review of the survey and some recommendations regarding the libraries' response.

The committee began by reviewing the participant pool to determine which patron groups were well represented in the survey responses. There were 471 respondents to the survey. Of that number, 83 were undergraduates, 97 were graduate students, 215 were faculty, 19 were staff, and 57 were library staff. In order to determine whether the pools of respondents were relevant, we compared the number of respondents to the number of possible respondents. The 81 undergraduate respondents represented .7% of the 11,404 undergraduate students. Only five respondents from the total survey pool were under the age of 22. According to the Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System report (IPEDS) of the university for Fall 2000, 8013 undergraduate students were under the age of 21. As our respondents constituted a potential of only .06% of this group, we deduced that the undergraduate pool was not representative of the general student body, but might be more representative of the non-traditional student population. We determined that both the faculty and the graduate student survey populations were relevant as they represented 24.88% (215/864) and 4.3% (97/2252) of the total populations respectively.

We identified three primary areas in which the faculty expressed discontent with the library services or functions.

- 1) access to print collections, including journal titles, and the addition of materials upon request;
- 2) library business hours;
- 3) and accuracy in the catalog, borrowing and overdue records.

We compared the results of the present survey with those conducted in 1989, 1994, 1995/96, 1998, and 1999. We then brainstormed the libraries' response to each issue and areas in which the faculty are either unaware of services or may have difficulties with the process. In each area, it is our opinion that significant strides have been made since the original voicing of the problems, and that additional publicity or marketing would assist in changing user perceptions. A review of each issue follows:

1) **Print collections; journal titles; materials added upon request**

History of problem

- 1989 - 50% of faculty surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with the libraries' collection of books, journals and audiovisual materials
- 1994 - Collections of books and journals considered poor; specific responses concerning math and African American materials
- 1995 - 40% of faculty found collections inadequate for research and scholarly endeavors, 33% found collections inadequate for teaching
- 1998 - Survey response showed "somewhat satisfied" with books, "not satisfied" with journals among survey respondents who used the libraries
- 1999 - Science and Social Science faculty were extremely negative on journal holdings

Activities which are in process or completed

- Preliminary reporting on ARL status of collections supporting doctoral programs (2000)
- Services to support collections - free ILL services to undergraduate honors students, graduates and faculty, searching for lost materials, and rush purchasing and cataloging of materials
- Rush ordering has been expedited through phone and fax ordering and priority shipping
- Purchased many full text titles (including databases) in the last 5 years

- New trials of databases are ongoing
- Rush purchasing recent materials requested through ILL
- Rush purchasing materials requested for library reserves
- New book shelf discontinued with library renovation; New materials list now available on-line
- Request forms available on-line and on InfoLinks to request purchasing
- New databases highlighted on web site
- Hired Collection Development Librarian (2001)
- Made collection development a priority initiative in library strategic planning (2001)
- Library is beginning to play a bigger role in collection purchases (2001)
- Purchased e-books (2001)
- Beginning process for selection of electronic materials (2001)

Issues

- Faculty do not understand subscription and budgeting cycles
- Faculty are not informed of purchase and shelf availability
- Faculty may be unaware of services regularly performed

2) **Business hours**

History of problem

- 1989 - Several comments regarding problems with closing at 6:30 (sic); request to stay open 24 hours a day; problems with abbreviated hours during the breaks
- 1994 - Several comments requesting that we be open all the time, extending evening hours
- 1995 - 51.9% were satisfied with hours; 23% were very satisfied
- 1998 - survey results were mixed with students and indicated that 37% of individuals desired more hours indicating a preference for staying open til 1:00am weekdays, extending weekends, and remaining open 24 hours
- 1999 - Science faculty desired extended hours and holiday times in branch libraries; Social science faculty indicated difficulty with holiday hours, weekends, and the closed east entrance doors

Activities which are in process or completed

- Added staff to open east doors for the same time as the rest of the library (2001)
- Adding staffing to Chemistry and Physics libraries and extending hours on nights and weekends (2002)
- ILL offices open Sundays and nights (2001)
- Added hours for the week before and during finals and before fall semester (1999)
- Added hours to Audiovisual (1999)
- Additional full-text resources are now available on-line

Issues

- Faculty unaware of what you can do electronically after hours
- People unaware of library hours during holidays
- We have tried to accommodate this request and the use did not justify the additional expense
- People are unaware of typical library service hours and what other institutions are doing
- LRC hours are very abbreviated and are currently not in our control
- Are people wanting collections, services or facilities in these extended hours?

3) **Accuracy in the cataloging, borrowing and overdue records***

* we believe that the concerns over shelving times and accuracy are also part of this issue

History of Problem

1989 - Survey focused on the need for an automated system, faculty also commented on cataloging, shelving and circulation records

Activities which are in process or completed

- Automated catalog and check-out (1992-1994)
- Automating of Chemistry, Physics, and Law Libraries (2001)
- Addition of MARCIVE records for government documents (1999)
- Additional cleanup of on-line records for government documents, monographs, serials, microforms, Chemistry, theses and dissertations, scores and recordings is continuing
- Several collections have been inventoried completely (AV, Chemistry, Physics)
- Shelving turn-around time reduced to two days (1995)
- Billing data is now automatically transmitted to the Treasurer's Office (2001)
- Library loads records for materials held in full-text databases (2001)
- Patron records are input directly from the Student Information System (1994)
- Library services include searching for lost and 'claim-returned' materials, holds and recalls of materials requested by other users, requesting missing or non-returned materials via ILL
- Overdue notices are e-mailed to individuals before fines are posted and patrons can renew their own renewal materials
- ILL e-mails patrons that requests have arrived or that materials are available in-house (2000/2001)
- Summary holdings statements are on most serial records; serials which are checked-in, claimed or sent to the bindery are noted on-line
- The Database Maintenance Unit in cataloging is devoted to correcting inaccurate monograph records and to authority control
- Main desk double checks all materials returned in bookdrops
- Shelf reading occurs as staff is available. Completed shelf reading of levels 1 and 3 in Mullins Library summer 2001.

Issues

- LRC is not yet in the pipeline to be on-line
- Patrons are unaware that shelving times have drastically been reduced in the past 8 years.

In addition to faculty comments, graduate student comments were also reviewed. The number of graduate students responding to the survey, 97, represented 4.3% of possible graduate students in the University. As such, we believed the sample may be indicative of the graduate student population. In addition to the faculty issues listed above, the graduate students responded in the following areas:

1) **The library as a haven for quiet and solitude**

History of problem

1994 - Several comments requesting a quieter library

1998 - Comments that the reading room was excellent and the study rooms were good

1999 - Comment indicating the graduate students should have "access to offices, not just cubicles"

Activities which are in-process or completed

- Constructed the Walton Reading Room, the Periodicals Room and four group study rooms (1997)
- Added additional rounds by full-time circulation employees other than the guards
- Constructed alcoves for quiet study on third floor as well as additional seating throughout levels

three and four (1997)

Issues

- Profusion of electronic equipment (printers, cell phones, etc.) adds to noise throughout library
 - Balancing among use of the library, new electronic services, and maintaining a contemplative environment
 - Limited number of graduate carrels and groups study rooms
 - Lack of group study or closed carrels in branch libraries
- 2) **Providing me with information allowing me to work in my own way / making information easily accessible for independent use / enabling me to find information myself 24 hours a day**

History

1994 - Comment that electronic access was too forbidding

1999 - Desired access via the web to journals

Activities which are in-process or completed

- Committee was formed in several iterations for discussing web-design
- Purchased several databases with full-text access to journal literature
- Moving from CD-ROM indexes and mediated searching toward independent searching via the web
- Efforts are being made to improve access to proxy server and via WAM table (2001)
- A position, Electronic Collections and Services Librarian, was created to provide web authoring
- The Electronic Texts Project obtained funding to assist in the purchase and marketing of electronic resources (1997-2000)

Issues

- Communication regarding new materials and resources. Users may be unaware of what is available
- User knowledge and experience in electronic library resources as well as their hardware and software configurations and general computing principles.
- Proliferation of software and hardware configurations as well as browsers.
- The rapidly changing environment of information resources and services
- What do people want? Resources, help-guides, paper items, people, services?

Committee Recommendations for Possible Areas of Review

1. Enhance marketing and communication -- particularly in the areas of collection management and survey research. The committee strongly believes that many of the issues addressed in the LibQual + survey and previous instruments could be addressed through marketing. Individuals may be expressing frustration with situations that have since been remedied. Additionally, they may not be aware of products and services available through the libraries. It is crucial that libraries follow through on surveys and inform users how their suggestions are to be incorporated or not into the libraries' services and programs.
2. Review materials and methods used for accepting requests for materials to be added upon demand and the methods employed in informing individuals that the requested items have been received.

3. Design a survey specifically targeted to the undergraduate population.
4. Continue to review our library hours as compared to our peers. Design a tool to analyze the services and products which would be used or desired if hours were extended.
5. Address the staffing and automation of LRC.
6. Perform availability studies to determine where difficulties exist in locating materials.
7. Study and review check-in procedures to ensure accuracy in patron records
8. Investigate possibilities for enhancing bibliographic instruction in the classroom as well as point-of service (i.e. rovers, term paper counseling)
9. Investigate on-going training to enhance the ability of staff to appropriately analyze and communicate information from our catalog and other databases.
10. Continue to review remaining catalog clean-up activities to determine the impact on catalog accuracy.
11. Seek further recommendations from graduate and non-traditional students with regard to the issues of the library as a quiet haven and unmediated library research.
12. Investigate methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the library webpage in enabling users to perform unmediated research.